Sandwell
CHRONICLE
Thursday, November 9, 2017

GROUP IN PLEDGE OVER TRANSFORMATION OF HIGH STREET

A HIGH street is set to be transformed in a bid to boost shoppers and trade, under 'exciting' plans. Bosses from London-based property group Oyster, which owns owns most of Cradley Heath High Street, says it has ploughed thousands of pounds into the area in recent months.

It promised that all 22 shops they own on the High Street and precinct will be rented out by the start of next year. Finishing touches are also being put to the flats above, which are set to go on the market for around £70,000 each.

The former market hall, which has stood empty since last June, could also be turned into a Home Bargains store.

A spokesman for Oyster Properties said: "We are hoping that by the start of next year every shop will be rented out. It is an exciting time.

"We are working in stages for the town to make sure that we attract more traders and younger families. There will be 21 new flats on top of the shops which we are conscious to be as affordable housing under the help to buy scheme. These will be finished by the end of this year.

"Footfall has improved greatly recently with the arrival of new tenants and we want to continue with that. Stage two will be looking at the former market hall, which sadly was no longer viable as a market due to the rates.

"Therefore whatever comes there has to be a viable solution. The ultimate scenario would be to have a Home Bargains store in there. We want the best for the town and for it to continue to get bigger and better. Hopefully we can attract more families too."

Among tenants to snap up the shops are a gym, beautician, fruit and vegetable stall, jewellery shop and cafe. Gary Link, from fishmongers Pier 39, based inside the precinct, said the future was looking brighter for the area.

He explained: "In the last few weeks we have had more potential traders come and view the shops than what we have had in the last few months. I have heard that a lot of people are interested in moving to Cradley Heath, which is great news."

Before the indoor market was closed last year, it was left with just one stallholder. Concerns were raised about falling footfall at the 40-stall capacity market hall, despite a five-figure investment by the property group.

Smethwick star receives top accolade from Queen

JULIE'S JOY AT DAME HONOUR

BLACK Country treasure Julie Walters has said winning Baftas and being nominated for Oscars could not compare to the honour of being made a dame.

The star, 67, who grew up in Smethwick, was named Dame Commander of the British Empire by the Queen in a ceremony which took place at Buckingham Palace on Tuesday.

Dame Julie with Peaky Blinders' Helen McCrory, OBE

The honour came almost 35 years after Dame Julie's breakout role in Educating Rita, for which she was nominated for an Academy Award.

Dame Julie, who studied at Smethwick's Holly Lodge Grammar School for Girls and later worked as a nurse at the QE Hospital in Birmingham, said: "It's fantastic, it's not really real. It was slightly nerve-wracking, 'when do I curtsey?' But everyone is the same. It's one of those things where you feel relieved (when you've done it), then you look back and think 'how fabulous'. I thought 'I wish my parents were here'."

At the same investiture ceremony actress Helen McCrory was made an OBE. The Peaky Blinders star was honoured for services to drama.

Comparing it to acting accolades she has recieved, Dame Julie said: "It's a different thing, it's the Government and the Queen, it's just a very different feel. It's a lovely thing, I can't explain it. The Baftas are fantastic and really important but it is about the business, and this is too but it's also about the country so it's special in that sense."

Rolling out ideas for future of town park

Councillors Simon Hackett, Susan Eaves and Syeda Khatun, with youngsters and friends of the park

YOUNG people have been consulted about their ideas to improve the facilities in Britannia Park in Rowley Regis. They were asked their views at an event involving Sandwell Council and the Friends of Britannia Park.

Councillors Syeda Khatun and Simon Hackett popped in with officers to a skateboarding contest in the park. "It was a very worthwhile event and it was good to be able to listen to the views of local young people because we want to take them into account when we plan improvements," said deputy leader Councillor Khatun.

She added: "There is also the hope that it will generate a sense of ownership of the park."

Councillor Hackett, cabinet member for children's services, said: "It is important to get along to events like this and engage with younger members of the public and to keep their views in mind when we discuss possible improvements in the future."

The skateboarding competition was backed with a £350 Youth Offer grant from the Rowley Local funding and was organised by the council's young people's services, Rowley CANDO.

SUSPECT

Police in appeal after hit-and-run

POLICE investigating an alleged hit-and-run involving a mother and her newborn baby have named a suspect. They have also released a picture of 32-year-old Andrew Rose who they believe left the scene of the crash in Great Barr on foot.

Mr Rose

Officers allege he left behind a blue Mazda MPS Aero Sports car that hit the 28-year-old mother and her four-day-old child on the A34 Walsall Road at 6pm on September 23.

Mr Rose, who is known to frequent Aston and Walsall, is described as being around 6ft 8in tall, heavily built, with brown eyes, a black beard and moustache. Anyone who sees Mr Rose or know of his whereabouts should not approach him – but call police urgently on 999. Both mother and baby have since been discharged from hospital and are continuing to recover at home.

Anyone who knows of Mr Rose's whereabouts or has any information should call police on 999 quoting log 2124 of September 23.

VANDALISM

Attack on windows sparks pool closure

A MAIN pool at Langley Swimming Centre was closed on Monday after vandals smashed windows at the venue.

The centre was targeted in what has been labelled 'pure vandalism'. Bosses say a 'handful' of windows that run alongside the main pool had to be boarded up.

The pool was reopened for lessons on Tuesday at 4pm.

A spokesman for Sandwell Leisure Trust (SLT) said: "It appeared someone had smashed a handful of windows alongside the main pool. We have boarded those up but have no further information on how the incident happened apart from it being pure vandalism."

A tweet on Monday morning said: "The pool will be closed until we manage to make the area completely safe."

INSIDE
LISA BACKING FEED A FAMILY

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Bring me sunshine, with Jensen at sale

The Jensen Interceptor

AN important part of British motoring and show business history, Eric Morecambe's lovingly restored 1968 Jensen Interceptor is up for auction at the NEC this weekend.

The sale, by Silverstone Auctions, is part of the Lancaster Insurance Classic Motor Show, to be held at the NEC, from tomorrow to Sunday. This is the first time the Jensen has been offered for public sale since its restoration.

It was bought by the comedian in 1968, just as he was starting on his meteoric path to superstardom as half of the Morecambe and Wise duo.

Costing double that of a Jaguar E-Type and more than the equivalent Aston Martin, the Interceptor was one of the most expensive cars in the world at the time.

After Morecambe's first heart attack just two months later, the Jensen became famous in its own right as the comedian recounted the story of how Yorkshireman Walter Butterworth jumped into the driving seat late one evening to drive the star to Leeds Infirmary, saving his life. It was during a television interview with Michael Parkinson in 1973 when Eric was telling the story of his rescue in the Jensen that the current owner, a then young Nick Whale, heard his father note: "That Jensen would be a great car to own one day."

Nick's father sadly passed away while he was still young, but his words prompted a decades-long search for the car. Now managing director of Silverstone Auctions, Nick would often scour classified ads and make frequent enquiries until he finally tracked down the famous Jensen to a garage in Belgium in 2014. The car is estimated to sell for £90-£110,000.

Cinema rescue work on way despite problems

CONSTRUCTION is set to start at a historic Black Country cinema in January – despite the project being marred by vandals.

Youths are said to have been climbing on the roof of the Gaumont Cinema in Wednesbury and the major revamp project leaders have had £4,000 worth of tools stolen.

But the 'disappointed' managing director of Picturedrome Cinemas, which stepped in to rescue the building, has given the green light for construction and praised the police.

Managing director Adam Cunard said: "We've had a lot of trouble with kids going on the roof, we have had lots of problem with youths. It's a real problem – there's nothing we can really do, it's really difficult. Last week we had £4,000 worth of tools nicked from our van outside our hotel.

"It was just disappointing – we have never had this issue anywhere else, we have had the odd break in.

Investment

"We're looking at starting construction in January – the police have been great actually, I can't fault them."

It comes as the major refurbishment, coming as part of a £2million investment, will look to create 30 new jobs. Council bosses hailed the project as 'fantastic'.

But concerns have grown amid the recent spate of vandalism. Councillor Elaine Costigan said: "I spoke to Adam Cunard the owner. What a state of affairs, you can't believe it."

"I will be speaking to the inspector to find out if they can up their game a little bit in the areas that's causing problems."

The recent trouble has also been described 'as disheartening' by councillor Peter Hughes. He said: "I think it's unfortunate that this is happening.

"Adam Cunard who has gone to the trouble of deciding to invest in this cinema. For us we cant wait for it to be open."

Club on track to attract members

Malcolm Hoffman, of Oldbury, at West Bromwich Rail Model Society's event at Wednesbury Museum and Art Gallery

MODEL railway enthusiasts have shown off their handiwork in a bid to attract new members.

West Bromwich Rail Model Club held its annual showcase at Wednesbury Museum and Art Gallery at the weekend.

In all there were around a dozen model layouts featuring everything from a Thomas the Tank Engine locomotive to a winter wonderland.

The group's chairman, David Miles, said: "We have been doing the open day for five years now at the museum. The idea is to show off what we do and encourage more people to come and join us on a regular basis. The Thomas the Tank engine display has a very clever mechanical layout and all the layouts there on Saturday were made by people in the club."

Although the majority of the club's 60 or so members are over 40, among those at the open day was six-year-old Ryan Jones who attends the society's meetings on a Monday with his father. "Each week he comes and he runs his train," explained Mr Miles. "Ryan is quite the little character.

"One of the guys now who is in his 20s has been with us since he was little."

The club meets on Monday and Thursday evenings from 7pm, as well as from 10am on Wednesdays, in Albert Street, Wednesbury. Anyone who wants more information can contact the club's secretary, David's brother Ian, on 0121 559 5673.

Speeding driver gets six years over crash

A SPEEDING driver has been jailed after being involved in a fatal crash.

Luke Harrington hit speeds of almost 70mph in a 40mph zone in his Vauxhall Corsa before the crash with another Corsa in Shenley Lane, Selly Oak, in March 2015.

Elizabeth Tindall, aged 36, from Weoley Castle, who was driving the other vehicle was taken to hospital with multiple injuries and died almost a week later.

Her passengers – a man in his 30s who was seriously injured and is still recovering – and a 12-year-old boy were also injured. Harrington remained at the scene and was charged with death by dangerous driving following an investigation by West Midlands Police's collision investigation unit.

The 22 year-old, of Forth Grove, Longbridge, was convicted of the offence after a trial at Birmingham Crown Court. He was sentenced to six years in jail – three of which will be spent in custody and a further three on licence – last Thursday.

Harrington will also be disqualified from driving for seven years following his release. Det Con Chris Ridge, from the regional Collision Investigation Unit, said: "Harrington was of previous good character but is now facing a considerable amount of time behind bars."

Winter break for collection

GARDENERS are being reminded that the Sandwell Council garden waste collection service is to go into its winter break next month.

The collection of the green bins will continue throughout November, breaking from December 4, until February 25, 2018. This means that residents last collections will be made during the weeks of November 20 or 27, depending on the fortnightly schedule for their area.

Councillor David Hosell, cabinet member for highways and environment, said: "We have had another successful year in collecting garden waste from people but we are now coming up to the annual winter break." Residents can view the date of their last collection by entering their postcode on the bin day calendar at www.sandwell.gov.uk/binday.

Ozzy Osbourne to play Download Festival

BRUMMIE metal icon Ozzy Osbourne will headline next year's Download Festival.

The three-day rock event at Donington Park announced the news the 68-year-old idol would be headlining earlier this week.

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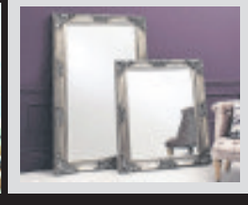
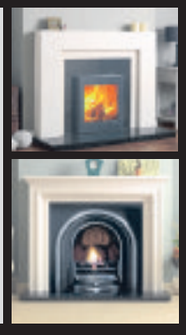
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Taxi licence was given to fraudster by council

A COUNCIL in the Black Country gave a taxi licence to a driver who was being prosecuted for fraud by a neighbouring local authority, it has been revealed.

Wolverhampton Council officials ignored a warning that the driver broke the terms of the licence granted to him by Sandwell Council by working out of the area covered by the badge, the city's Crown Court was told.

Several other drivers caught in the same purge and dealt with at a magistrates court were also given licences by Wolverhampton City Council, it was claimed.

Aklilu Tedros pleaded guilty to fraud and received a four-month prison sentence suspended for 18 months. He was also ordered to do 80 hours unpaid work and pay £800 towards the cost of the case after he elected trial but admitted the offence on the day the hearing was due to start.

The 37-year-old father of four from Eritrea was given a private hire taxi licence after applying to Sandwell Council in March 2015. The local authority – like Birmingham but unlike Wolverhampton – only gives licences to those based and working in the borough.

Tedros, from Gregory Avenue, Weoley Castle, confirmed he would be doing this and gave the name of the local firm he would be working for.

10,000th patient at disease centre

A CENTRE which treats people with rare diseases has welcomed its 10,000th patient since opening just over two years ago.

The Centre for Rare Diseases at University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust caters for a range of complex conditions across 19 specialties. It is based at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital campus at Edgbaston. The first patient appointments were back in September 2015.

Dr Graham Lipkin, consultant nephrologist and Centre for Rare Diseases lead, said: "It's rewarding to see the number of patients receiving care and treatment at the centre grow over a relatively short period.

"Our unique one-stop service really improves a patient's visit."

Crocus campaign

FIFTY thousand crocuses will be planted across Wolverhampton this week as part of the Rotary campaign to eradicate polio from the world. They will be dug in at sites including Tettenhall and Bilston.

170 queries found with Brum's 2022 bid

An artist's impression of the games

BIRMINGHAM'S bid for the 2022 Commonwealth Games remains the only option despite federation bosses raising 170 'detailed queries' about its application.

The city is still the only candidate in the running to host the global games, with the extended deadline set to close at the end of the month.

It comes as Commonwealth Games England chairman Ian Metcalfe revealed a string of issues were flagged up after the bid was submitted.

But he claimed the bid was in 'good shape' after fine details were resolved and said he was confident the games would come to the city in five years' time.

Mr Metcalfe added: "We recognised that with our bid we had done in just under six months what normally takes two years to do. There were around 170 detailed queries about aspects of the bid, some were important around the athletes' village, some were relatively minor.

"There is a productive conversation between a group of partners looking to arrive at a situation where we can give the federation certainty that, if given the games, we can host an inspiring event."

Birmingham became Britain's candidate city for the games after beating Liverpool and winning government backing. It was the only bid submitted to the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) by the original September 30 deadline after interest from other countries dwindled. But after the city's bid was reviewed at a Sri Lanka meeting, the federation's executive board declared it was not 'fully compliant' and allowed rival cities an extra two months to come forward.

First award in Darren's memory issued at event

Callum Hixon receives the Darren Cooper Award from Councillor Simon

College Principal Graham Pennington and Sameena present the Inter-

SOME of the brightest and the best young stars of business talent and innovation were recognised at a Sandwell awards ceremony.

Taking place at Sandwell College, the awards included the first in memory of the late Sandwell Council leader Darren Cooper.

The awards were organised by Sandwell College in collaboration with the council and Sandwell Business Solutions.

ITV Central presenter Sameena Ali-Khan hosted the annual awards at the college's Central Campus in West Bromwich. The winner of the Darren Cooper Award was 17-year-old Callum Hixon, who completed his business administration apprenticeship at Sandwell College, and now works for Sandwell Council.

The late Councillor Darren Cooper

Callum, a former student at ACE Academy Tipton, started with the council a year ago working in the revenues and benefits team. He is also studying towards a Level 2 business administration qualification. He was singled out by his colleagues as being an outstanding employee who learned the skills to do his job very quickly and is always eager to learn more.

Callum said: "I was very surprised to have won this award. I would like to thank everyone who has supported me along the way to help me achieve this. I am very grateful for the opportunities I have been given."

Respected council leader and father-of-three Mr Cooper died in March last year at the age of 52 having been a councillor for almost 25 years. The award was set up to recognise outstanding apprentices and is judged by Sandwell Council's apprentices team.

Meanwhile, traineeship Learner of the Year went to Afhan Hassan, who completed his traineeship with Shaf's MOT.

Intermediate Apprentice of the Year was Sarah Bullock, of Accord Housing Group, while Higher Apprentice of the Year was Amy Mills of Liberty Industries Group.

Winning businesses included Mi-Glass for Business Innovation, REPC for Commitment to Employee Development, Diamond Bus for Sandwell's Top 50, David Manners for New Employer of the Year, Options for Life for Developing Apprenticeship Talent, Scott Arms Dental Practice for Small/Medium Employer of the Year and Lovell Partnership for Large Employer of the Year Award.

Sandwell College Principal Graham Pennington said: "It's fantastic to see so many people celebrating success."

NEWS IN BRIEF

£400 fly-tipping fine is imposed

A COUNCIL has issued its latest fly-tipping fine after tyres and a mattress were dumped.

The £400 fine dished out by Sandwell Council is the 31st issued by the enforcement team since May.

The fixed penalty notice was handed out for rubbish left on land at the back of Hill Top/Wallface in West Bromwich.

Chiefs said the new enforcement powers, as well as putting cameras in hotspots, has 'contributed to a sharp fall in fly-tipping reports'.

They are down 13 per cent across Sandwell, with Smethwick seeing a reduction of nearly 40 per cent.

Fireworks blitz garden shed

A SHED was destroyed and trees damaged in a fire caused by fireworks in Tividale. Crews were called to the incident in Kier Hardie Walk.

Oldbury Fire, tweeted: "Our first #Fireworks disaster this evening was in #Tividale where this shed and trees were destroyed."

Nobody was injured but the fire service said children had been frightened and required reassurance.

The incident, on Friday night, prompted firefighters to issue safety advice including the use of suitable supports and launchers when setting off rockets.

Classic cars will be motoring in

THOUSANDS of classic car enthusiasts are descending on the NEC as a major event returns to the West Midlands.

More than 2,500 cars and motorbikes will be on display at the Classic Motor Show, running from Friday to Sunday, covering an area the size of 12 football pitches.

It is the largest show of its kind in the UK and is always popular with motoring fans.

For more information and to book tickets from £23.50 visit www.nec classicmotorshow.com.

Coffee morning to boost RBL coffers

A COFFEE morning is taking place at a funeral directors in aid of the Royal British Legion. The event will be held at H Cope Limited Funeral Directors in Cradley Heath tomorrow, Friday.

The firm is inviting the public to come along any time between 10am and noon.

The funeral directors can be found in Lashford House, Reddal Hill Road.

For Further information about the coffee morning call 01384 569388.

COUNTY NEWS

Ex-TV favourite Kay starts appeal

A FORMER television presenter has launched a Christmas appeal for a Black Country-based charity.

Ex-BBC Midlands Today presenter Kay Alexander has kicked off Acorns Children's Hospice Christmas appeal.

It aims to raise £70,000 towards the nearly £10 million the charity needs to raise each year to continue providing its vital services across the region. Kay, who recently became Acorns President, said: "Acorns is an extraordinary charity and one which is very close to my heart."

Kay launched the charity's very first fundraising appeal more than 30 years ago.

Commons date for businesses

THE message that Black Country-made products are sold across the world has been delivered at the Houses of Parliament.

The Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership teamed up with Dudley North Labour MP Ian Austin to stage a Black Country exhibition to showcase a wide range of goods manufactured by nearly 30 companies from across the area. The LEP demonstrated HVM City: The Opportunity Gateway, a new online portal, allows high value manufacturing companies to register tender opportunities as well as businesses and individuals to access tender opportunities.

Microbrewery set to bring jobs

A MICROBREWERY is opening in Wolverhampton bringing four new jobs, after council bosses approved the plans. The brewery is to open along Tremont Street, off the Wednesfield Road, just outside of the city centre.

The current Soho Cash & Carry will be converted into the brewery as part of the plans. The brewery will employ three full-time staff and one part-time member of staff. It will be open from 8am to 6pm Monday to Friday and from 8am to 12 noon on Saturdays.

A few tickets left for Motty

JUST a few tickets remain to see legendary Football commentator John Motson give a talk later this month.

Motty, as he is fondly known, is hanging up the microphone at the end of this season after 50 years.

The 72-year-old, who is famous for his full-length sheepskin coats, will be the subject of an 'Evening With' show at the Banks's Stadium on November 16.

Where to drop off your contributions

ALL your donations to the Express & Star's Feed A Family This Christmas appeal will be shared out between food banks and other charitable organisations across the Black Country and Staffordshire.

We are asking for seasonal treats such as mince pies, chocolates and Christmas puddings, as well as basics including canned goods, long-life milk, fruit juice, pasta and rice.

We just ask that festive food has a best before date of the end of January. Non-food items such as toiletries, new socks and small gifts will also be gratefully received.

The good causes we will be supporting again this year include The Well (Home of Wolverhampton Food Bank).

We are also helping the Good Shepherd Ministry, based in Wolverhampton, and the Black Country Food Bank, which has centres across Dudley, Sandwell and Walsall. Other groups include Smethwick Food Bank, Walsall North Food Bank and Cannock and District Food Bank.

The appeal will also be supporting The Haven which provides support services to women and children who are affected by domestic violence and homelessness.

The drop-off points are: Express & Star Wolverhampton, 51-53 Queen Street, WV1 1ES; Express & Star Cannock/Walsall office, Queen Square, Cannock WS11 1EA; Oldbury office: Black Country House, Rounds Green Road, Oldbury, B69 2DG;

Waitrose Wolverhampton, Penn Road, WV2 4NJ; The Midcounties Co-operative Food Store Codsall, 28-32 Wood Lane/Bakers Way, Codsall WV8 1DB. Donations dropped off here will go to The Well.

Further donation points may be confirmed in the coming weeks.

Give vital gift of help for struggling families

FROM single mothers knowing there is nothing in the cupboard for tea to workers who suddenly find themselves out of a job – food banks are a vital lifeline.

Many have seen the number of people turning to them for help continue to rise with unemployment, changes to benefits and low wages all playing a part.

And, at this time of year, many are also faced with the heart-breaking choice of either putting food on the table or heating their home.

We have teamed up with sister daily the Express & Star to launch the Feed A Family This Christmas appeal to support the food banks.

The appeal was a huge success last year collecting 9,000 items for food banks, the homeless and children at The Haven refuge.

From now until December 16, we are collecting contributions of non-perishable food and toiletries as well as socks and hats.

The good causes we are supporting are The Well (Home of Wolverhampton Food Bank), the Good Shepherd Ministry, based in Wolverhampton, the Black Country Food Bank, which has centres across Dudley, Sandwell and Walsall, Smethwick Food Bank, Walsall North Food Bank and Cannock and District Food Bank.

The appeal will also be supporting The Haven which supports women and children who are affected by domestic violence and homelessness.

Loading up the vans – food being transported to where it is needed

Lisa Riley, who will be appearing in Jack and The Beanstalk at Wolverhampton Grand, is backing the campaign

Former Emmerdale star Lisa Riley, who will be appearing in Jack and The Beanstalk at Wolverhampton Grand, is backing the campaign.

She said: "I think this is fantastic. There are so many people who need a lot. We can come together as a community and do that extra bit for people even if it's tin of beans."

All of the organisations that will benefit from Feed A Family This Christmas are helping people in need every day. The Black Country Food Bank saw a 12 per cent increase in demand between August 2016 and this August .

"The roll out of Universal Credit has had an impact. People are waiting up to six weeks for their benefits and they are already in debt by the time they get that first payment," a spokeswoman said. "We've seen an increase in homelessness too.".

The Well in Wolverhampton continues to provide food and toiletries to more than 7,500 people a year. While Cannock and District Food Bank has also seen an increase, helping 3,634 people in 2016/17, up from 2,676 in 2015/16.

Walsall North Food Bank, which is based at Pelsall Methodist Church, helped more than 450 extra people in 2016/17.

Group head of weekly titles Diane Davies said: "We were overwhelmed by the amazing response we received from our communities last year. his year we have seen increasing demand on food banks.

"Please help us to make a difference to people in need."

MP named on list hails from Black Country

A TORY MP who has referred himself to the police following allegations of inappropriate sexual behaviour is originally from the Black Country.

Chris Pincher 'voluntarily stood down' from the Whips' Office and also referred himself to the party's complaints procedure amid accusations surrounding former Olympic rower and Tory activist Alex Story.

Mr Pincher, who was born in Walsall and grew up in Wombourne, is the current MP for Tamworth.

The accusations relate to an alleged incident at his London home in 2001 – nearly a decade before he was first elected.

Mr Pincher said: "Whatever may or may not have happened or been said was obviously many years before I became an MP. If Mr Story has ever felt offended by anything I said then I can only apologise to him."

The 48-year-old was a key member of the Government whips operation and was effectively number three to South Staffordshire MP Gavin Williamson before he became Defence Secretary. So far four Midlands Conservative MPs have faced accusations about their behaviour following the leaking of a list of alleged sex pests.

Shrewsbury MP Daniel Kawczynski has been referred to the party's disciplinary committee, while Wyre Forest MP Mark Garnier is being investigated over an alleged incident where he asked a former member of staff to buy sex toys.

While Lichfield MP Michael Fabricant revealed he featured on the list but strongly denied the accusation he had been 'inappropriate' with a male journalist in a taxi.

Crowdfunding idea to support causes

A CROWDFUNDING initiative has been launched by Wolverhampton Council to help worthwhile projects get up and running.

This year's Make:Shift event will see a crowdfunding platform website set up to enable businesses to offer support to causes in the city.

Full details will be unveiled on Saturday, between 10am and 4pm, at the Bob Jones Community Hub, in Bromley Street, Blakenhall.

People who benefit from the crowdfunding could receive financial support, staff time and equipment

For more details about Make:Shift, contact Sam Axtell on 01902 554918 or email sam.axtell2@wolverhampton.gov.uk. Tickets are free and include a free lunch and refreshments. Book now at www.eventbrite.co.uk

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Trust stands by Carillion over fears on hospital

FINANCIAL troubles at Carillion should not put a new £350 million 'super hospital' in Smethwick at risk, health chiefs have said.

The chief executive of Sandwell's hospital trust said he was confident the Midland Metropolitan Hospital, which is currently being built, would be completed despite much-publicised difficulties at the Wolverhampton-based firm.

The opening of the Midland Met, which will replace Sandwell General as the main hospital in the borough, has already been delayed by at least six months to spring 2019, due to engineering problems, including fitting pipes and wires.

Toby Lewis, chief executive of the Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust, which will run the Midland Met, said the construction giant had 'financial governance' in place and that he 'felt confident that they will meet obligations for the next two years'.

Carillion was hit by gloomy forecasts of major job losses amid massive cost-cutting at the firm last month.

It is thought Midland Met is one of four 'challenging' contracts that account for about half of an £845million write-down in the value of Carillion's construction work.

The company announced the sale of more assets in a bid to shore up its finances.

Singer releases Bowie tribute

HER summer single release How She Runs was a big success, and now MeMe Detroit is back with a tribute to one of her musical heroes.

The Brummie grunge girl is releasing her latest track tomorrow, Friday, a cover of David Bowie's smash hit Ashes To Ashes. It will drop via her own founded label SoulRock Central Records. She said she was inspired by Bowie 'thanks to a box of hand-me-down vinyls passed through the generations'.

The single was recorded with engineer and producer Alastair Jamieson, who has previously worked with Duran Duran. "When choosing to take on such an iconic track as this, I knew that I'd have to make it my own," said MeMe.

U2 tribute in gig

A BEAUTIFUL Day will be assured when a U2 tribute act performs next year. U2-2 will perform at Bilston's Robin 2 on September 7. Tickets cost £10 in advance or £12 on the door. For details go to therobin.co.uk

Ghostly goings-on captured on film

Ghost hunting at Haden Old Hall

AN HISTORIC Black Country house notorious for paranormal activity has been investigated by the team from TV's Most Haunted as part of a new episode.

Haden Old Hall in Cradley Heath, which dates back to the late 1600s, has played host to the popular ghost hunters. The episode has already aired, but are available on playback.

Jane Hanney, museum services manager, said: "There are lots of ghost stories and strange goings on associated with Haden Old Hall, the most famous of which is the story of a young girl who falls in love with a monk from Halesowen Abbey. His superiors found out and he is said to have been bricked up with nothing but a small amount of food and one candle as punishment."

The ghost-busting crew visited the site earlier this year. Among its cast is television presenter Yvette Fielding.

They were filmed investigating the house for paranormal activity in the pitch black, while the film crews rolled the cameras. Their findings were shown in a two-part episode, which was shown on Really TV on Sunday October 29 and Monday 30. Yvette highlighted how the history of the site goes back to the medieval era and there could be 'lost souls' left behind. She was struck by an object, which looked wooden, on her leg.

Yvette called out 'did you do that?' and 'do you mean me and the rest of us harm?' which was followed by banging, as if to answer her questions. The crew split up into groups and reported an eerie feeling. At one point the crew thought they heard a growl. The episodes are available on uktvplay.uktv.co.uk

A&E patients face being sent to GP for treatment

PATIENTS will be sent to GPs directly from Sandwell Hospital's A&E in a bid to ease pressure on staff this winter.

From later this month, A&E staff will be able to decide whether patients will be better off being seen by a GP.

The patients would be booked in with an available GP practice or walk-in centre somewhere in the Sandwell borough and the results passed to their GP.

It is hoped the move will have a major impact in reducing patients numbers at the A&E where waiting time targets have not been met for the last two years.

Health chiefs are attempting to reach the 95 per cent target of patients seen in four hours by January but are wary about the challenge they face over the winter.

Impact

The amount of patients who return to hospital after being sent to a GP will be monitored to judge what impact it has.

Toby Lewis, chief executive of the Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust, which runs Sandwell General, believes the new system will be key to ensuring staff will be able to cope.

He said: "With the major expansion in primary care appointments this is now the right time to be able, for a minority of patients, to offer them the certainty of clinical review in a place more suitable than a major A&E department.

"We will monitor the volume of transfer achieved and also whether patients re-attend A&E after a first visit and discharge to primary care."

The trust was warned this week by the Care Quality Commission that it must get patients who attend A&E seen more quickly.

Around 100 patients have been waiting more than four hours to be seen at Sandwell General and City Hospitals and around 80 per cent for 2017 as a whole.

The national NHS target is to have 95 per cent seen within that time.

Digital Qur'an exhibition set to tour

The digital version of the Birmingham Qur'an, as seen at the University of Birmingham

THE University of Birmingham is taking a major interactive digital exhibition telling the fascinating story of the Birmingham Qur'an to the United Arab Emirates for the first time.

One of the oldest surviving Islamic manuscripts, the Birmingham Qur'an is considered a global treasure. Exhibition visitors will be able to explore the manuscript in digital form as well as viewing a detailed replica of the holy script.

Working closely with the British Council and the UAE Ministry of Culture and Knowledge Development as strategic partner, the University is taking the unique exhibition to Sharjah, Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

Uni Vice-Chancellor Professor Sir David Eastwood said: "The Birmingham Qur'an manuscript is of huge significance to Muslim heritage. We are immensely proud to host such a treasure at the University of Birmingham."

NEWS IN BRIEF

Staff transferred back to the NHS

MORE than 400 hospital staff have been transferred back to the NHS from private firm G4S. Housekeeping and portering workers are now back in the employment of the Heart of England NHS Trust in Birmingham.

Chanel Camilleri-Willis, of Unison said: "The decision to move services back under NHS provision from the private company G4S is something that local Unison activists have campaigned for ever since they were first privatised over a decade ago.

"The NHS should be run for the benefit of patients, with staff given decent terms and conditions, not for the benefit of shareholders."

Tattoo returning to city's arena

THE Birmingham International Tattoo returns to Arena Birmingham on November 25 and 26.

The three-hour military show features more than 1,000 performers including marching bands from Poland, the Netherlands and across the UK.

The Band of the Household Cavalry and the Band of The Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment will be joined by all the marching bands.

Performances are at 6pm on the Saturday and 2pm Sunday with tickets from £12.50 to £30 on sale through the box office at 0844 338 8222.

Carole King show on way to region

A MUSICAL celebrating the life of legendary singer/songwriter Carole King, who wrote hits such as You Make Me Feel Like A Natural Woman, Will You Still Love Me Tomorrow and You've Got A Friend, is performing in the Midlands.

The show, Beautiful, has begun its run at Birmingham Hippodrome from November 7 to 11 and returns to the same theatre from January 31 and February 3.

Wolverhampton Grand will then host the musical later on next year from June 12 to 16.

Festive musical on its way to theatre

A CHRISTMAS musical is being staged in a Birmingham theatre. The BMOS Musical Theatre Company, formed in 1886, is performing Miracle on 34th Street – The Musical from November 14 to 18 at the New Alexandra Theatre. There are performances each day at 7.30pm and a Saturday matinee at 2.30pm.

The show is based on the movies of 1947 and 1994. Tickets are from £11,50 from 0844 871 3011.

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IN MY VIEW
with Mark Andrews

Price rise that leaves consumer smarting

MY bill from British Gas has just landed on the doormat, covering the period when the company we all love to hate imposed its extortionate 15 per cent price rise.

Interestingly, while the latest reading was taken from the "smart meter", which gives exact readings by remote control, the company still found it necessary to estimate how much gas and electricity I had used before September 1, when the new charges came into force. Now if these meters are so smart, why couldn't they have provided an accurate reading for the amount of energy used before the rise?

I have no idea how accurate the estimate was – like a lot of you, I don't have the time to sit there staring at the little black box to keep tabs on how much power the washing machine consumes on its fast spin cycle. But I would be very surprised if the estimate did not work in British Gas's favour. It's funny how these new smart meters tend to be at their smartest when it benefits the energy company.

■ ■ ■ ■

THE late 1980s were about as good as life in this country got. Sharp suits, fast cars and decent television programmes, a time when we had everything we needed – when a giant mobile phone was a harmless gimmick rather than something which turned youngsters into zombies.

But for all the great things came out of that decade, I would suggest Hofmeister lager was not one of them. The flavourless fizzy goo is best remembered for its adverts starring George the Bear, a leering cockney in a shell suit and pork-pie hat. Incredibly, it is making a comeback. It was even voted the "best lager" in blind taste tests. Which is a bit like saying Eddie the Eagle was our best ski jumper.

■ ■ ■ ■

IT SEEMS we have been hit by a bit of a crime wave, with offences in the West Midlands force area up by 14 per cent.

Maybe it is to be expected, given we are now urged to report every bit of bad manners as a "hate crime".

What is revealing, though, is another set of figures showing areas of the West Midlands with the highest crime levels. As you would expect, central Birmingham tops the list with 1,030 crimes in June, but it is the next bit that gets interesting. In second place is Dudley town centre, with 752 crimes – three quarters that of Birmingham – and in fifth place is Stourbridge, with 416 crimes. These two towns have both seen their police stations closed to the public. A coincidence, I'm sure.

Brown revelations, and redhead Anne sparks anger

Sinking feeling – David Attenborough. Too much slow-mo and mood music on his show

Not seeing sense – Gordon Brown. He has revealed he feared losing his eyesight as PM

Seeing red – Anne Robinson, causing untold outrage in the shape of, how many tweets?

Fine Dave, but forget the rhapsody in Blue

THE BEST OF PETER RHODES

THANKS for your messages about misused commas. I loved the police drink-drive campaign one Christmas with posters reading: "Don't drink, take drugs and drive."

THESE days, criticising David Attenborough is the closest thing we have to heresy. But at risk of the rack and disembowelment, I think Blue Planet II (BBC1) overdoes the music and the slow-motion.

I WAS surprised to learn this week that mental-health professionals in London estimate more than 11,000 people could experience "difficulties of some description" as a result of the Grenfell Tower fire. Do we give thanks that modern psychology can detect traumatic stress in so many individuals? Or do we simply wonder what's going on? I am reminded of an interview I did with a lady recalling her experience of the 1941 Blitz in Swansea, when she was nine. Her street took a direct hit. She and her family were buried in their cellar for hours. She emerged to learn that her best friend, also nine, had been killed in the house opposite. The next day she reported for school and her teacher asked why she was wearing plimsolls. The little girl explained that her school shoes were buried in the rubble of her house. Kindly but firmly, the teacher said she should go back and look for her shoes, "because we don't want Mr Hitler to think he's winning." That was then and Grenfell Tower is now, and I wonder what the Blitz generation would make of it all.

"I CANNOT work with you a moment longer." With those words, bus operator Sydney Hardy closed his company in Somerset, leaving 27 staff jobless. We can only guess at the stress that led to such a decision, but never underestimate the difficulties of employing other people. I have a friend who runs a small company. I once asked him what it's like having 40 employees. "Like having 40 children," he replied.

NEW guidelines from the Good Housekeeping Institute say ice cream kept in the freezer for more than three months can lose its taste. Now, what taste would that be? Ice cream used to be tasty in about 1957 but the modern stuff is taste-free which probably explains why they've starting lacing the caramel varieties with that cheap, all-purpose flavour enhancer, salt.

IN his memoirs out next week, former prime minister Gordon Brown speaks frankly about his failing sight. Pity he wasn't so frank when he was in power. I recall showing him a newspaper with headlines about the state of the economy. He brushed the paper away with one hand. With hindsight, I realise Brown was hiding the fact that he couldn't read it. At the time, it seemed a rude gesture from a very odd bloke.

I AM amazed that any politician can defend fixed-odds gambling machines, the devices that can bankrupt a punter in a matter of hours. These infernal machines are Robin Hood in reverse, robbing the poor to make the rich very rich indeed. One spokesman for the industry this week declared that if the maximum odds were greatly reduced, it would mean the closure of thousands of betting shops. And good riddance, too.

BARRY Sheerman MP has been accused of snobbery for suggesting "better-educated people" voted to remain in the EU. But he is undeniably right. Brexit was never an intellectual exercise. It was a genuine working-class movement, the same sort of grass-roots uprising that gave us the welfare state and the NHS. And who is to say that the workers got it wrong and academia got it right?

YOU could just as well argue that those exposed to Britain's lefty-liberal education system for longest were thoroughly indoctrinated in an ivory-tower view of the EU, while people living and working in the real world saw it for what it was. A modern-languages professor in London won't hold the same opinion as a self-employed electrician in Wisbech. The first rejoices in Europe's rich culture. The second sees his jobs being taken by Polish workers. In last year's referendum we did not vote on the basis of our exam results or IQ. We each took our own life experiences to the ballot box, and a majority wanted to be out rather than in.

MEANWHILE, here's a lesson in how to create lots of offence from virtually nothing. From the Daily Telegraph website: "Anne Robinson has caused widespread outrage after saying women nowadays are 'fragile' and unable to deal with sexual harassment in the workplace." So what is the evidence for this "widespread outrage"? A million women marching on Robinson's office, perhaps? An internet poll signed by tens of thousands of the outraged? Not exactly. The Telegraph's "widespread outrage" was four tweets from Radio 4 listeners.

TALKING POINT

Just the ticket to drive me off road

The last time I did it, R Kelly was number one in the charts with Ignition, while at the cinema the film "Finding Nemo" had just been released in the United States.

I can't say I found it an enjoyable experience but at the time, it was a case of needs must.

These days, to me, driving is definitely something other people do, which is just as well as after all this time it would be unreasonable to assume that the finer points of the rules of the road have stayed the same.

I was reminded how rapidly such a mundane activity can change by a press release listing 10 rules drivers might have forgotten or did not know.

Many motorists might know they are not legally allowed to flash their lights to give way to others, but how many would be able to say that letting pets out of the car if it has broken down on the hard shoulder is a no-no according to the Highway Code?

Similarly, it's widely known that splashing a pedestrian is an offence, but how about this: paying with a phone at a drive-through takeaway is against the law unless the engine is switched off and handbrake applied.

Talking of pedestrians, pavements these days are turning into an area that could benefit from an on-foot equivalent of the Highway Code. Cyclists, mobility scooters, pushchairs, skateboarders, delivery vans . . . all are jostling for space on pavements and in pedestrianised areas where space is limited by A-boards, lamp posts, benches, and planters etc.

It's a wonder pedestrians can even get to where they want to, without an unpleasant confrontation or serious injury, but even they can cause problems.

Consider the 'shall we dance?' ritual as people walking towards each other step to the same side to let the other one pass. How about a 'keep left' rule seeing as that's the side we drive on in Britain?

And what about the formation walking teams who stroll along three or even four abreast, forcing those behind them to attract their attention so they can pass without stepping into the road? Let's see a 'leave enough space for overtaking' rule to deal with that one. And when leaving a shop, try looking both ways to avoid collisions with other pavement users.

It's enough to make you want to get behind the wheel again. On second thoughts though, is it worth having to look out for those pesky pedestrians day in day out? Whether on foot or driving, let's be more considerate to each other, shall we? Until then, everyone get out of the way, I've got a bus to catch!

STEVE PARLETT

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Population has doubled in 100 years

IT has been announced that the population in the next decade will reach 70 million in the United Kingdom.

This will mean a doubling of the population in the last 100 years. We hear constantly that our services are being stretched to the limit due to underfunding. Successive Governments have not really helped the situation. We did away with apprenticeships in favour of universities and now we are left with too few good tradesmen.

We closed schools due to a falling birth rate and then opened the floodgates to immigration meaning that now we have too few schools. We have closed small hospitals in favour of super hospitals with fewer beds and have fewer A&E departments and wonder why they cannot cope.

Our police forces appear to be so demoralised that most crimes are increasing but are not being investigated.

We are decimating our countryside for unwanted and expensive projects like HS2, so that the new elite can get to London about 15 minutes earlier. We were encouraged to buy diesel vehicles only to find that now we are polluting our cities and causing premature deaths. We slap the wrists of criminals in the hope that they will behave.

We appear as the older generation to be the problem nowadays as there are too many of us. Unless attitudes change, we need not worry about the future if we look at obesity, drink and drug related deaths as so many younger people will not live to see old age. I am often asked if I would like to be young again. I answer possibly, but not younger now. I feel that our lives were better when we had little.

LEN HALES
Cradley Heath

Fairness and balance is needed

WHILE accepting your point that the 'first past the post' voting system does not give a fair reflection of MPs for the number of votes cast and can be seen as unfair and undemocratic (John Davenport 23/10).

But until this is changed to a 'fairer' PR way of voting we have to work under the present system. I could not let your comment about 'gerrymandering' go.

This hysterical statement was way off the mark.

You want a fair system, I want a fair system but where is the fairness when it can take twice as many votes to get a Conservative MP elected as a Labour MP?

No 'gerrymandering' just fairness and balance so that votes count in principle that should be the argument you should have written.

You gave the impression something illegal was going on but the Boundary Commission is totally independent.

KEITH JONES
Cradley Heath

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

POST
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EMAIL
sandwell.chronicle@expressandstar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

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How will new speed limits be enforced?

I NOTE with interest Sandwell Council's plan to introduce more 20mph speed limits. I wonder if someone from the council would explain how these new area speed limits are going to be enforced. The whole of the West Bromwich town centre was made 20mph, a few years ago at a cost of over £40,000, if my memory serves me right. The speed limits in this area continue to be exceeded, every second of every minute 24 hours a day.

This is hardly surprising, as it remains almost totally ignored and unenforced. Perhaps councillors should check with the local police to find out if they have the manpower to enforce the existing speed limits before wasting any more council tax on yet another unenforced speed limit.

ALAN J HUNT
West Bromwich

Going back a century for 20mph

FRIAR Park is the latest area to receive speed restrictions of 20 mph, a limit which was previously set for cars by the 1903 Motor Car Act and which stood until January 1931.

Friar Park is an area with lots of traffic calming, previously advocated by the council, which has failed. Large increases in killed and seriously injured in Sandwell in 2014 – when 20 restrictions were put into the town centre – and an annual national fatality figure which seems to be stuck around 1,700 suggests all is not well regarding go slow town centre safety plans.

A further question: why are you and I paying record fuel duty for a century old speed limit? Cars increasingly offer safety at reasonable speeds in their designs, but it seems those who run our roads celebrate taking us back to yesteryear.

Ferrari fuel duty, Morris Marina roads.

LEE WILLIAMS
Great Barr

Mum's pride as Harrison is inspiration to thousands

Willard's pinpoint perfect art on show

MICRO-SCULPTOR Willard Wigan has launched a new exhibition of his amazingly tiny artworks at a shopping and leisure centre in Birmingham.

The Wolverhampton artist will show 25 pieces in his new collection – sculptures presented inside the eye of a needle or on the head of a pin to show their scale.

They include the Guinness World Record holding sculpture Golden Voyage – a motorbike carved from specs of gold inside a hollowed-out human hair – which is the smallest sculpture in the world. Also featured will be his take on The Last Supper and Evolution (from ape to man).

The artist grew up on the Ashmore Park estate, near Willenhall, and developed his art after struggling at school because of undiagnosed autism/Asperger's syndrome.

Famous works include a replica of the coronation crown created in celebration of the Queen's diamond jubilee which now resides at Buckingham Palace. He was awarded an MBE for services to art in 2007.

Wigan and his work will also be explored in a one-hour Channel 4 documentary due to be broadcast whilst the works are on show at Resorts World Birmingham until December 22, from12-7pm between Wednesday-Saturday and 12-5pm on Sundays. The artist, now 60, said: "It's a pleasure to share with the people of the West Midlands my works of art and for them to discover and explore the pieces at this exhibition."

Willard Wigan, whose artwork will be on display at Resorts World

A MOTHER has paid tribute to her son's weight-loss efforts which have inspired thousands around the world.

Schoolboy Harrison Wright, aged 12, has become an online sensation with his social media posts which highlight his diet and exercise efforts. And he has also been honoured with a Radio 1 Teen Award. Harrison's mother Kerry, aged 45, from Wednesbury, said her son has overhauled his entire eating regime after they were contacted by his school.

She said when Harrison was 10, they got a letter from the school nurse saying he was overweight.

"It was quite an abrupt and harsh letter, but I do feel for the school nurses, because there's no way of saying it nicely.

"I think Harrison was upset by it, but we already had decided that there was a problem so I think that lessened how much it hurt him.

Kerry was worried that Baggies fan Harrison's weight was affecting his health and his confidence, so she decided to encourage him towards a healthier lifestyle.

Nutritious

She said: "He used to love KFC and we ate a lot more takeaways than we do now and a typical day for Harrison would involve no exercise. Before, on an average day, he would have cereal for breakfast, sandwiches with some crisps and fruit for lunch and tea would be fairly nutritious but the portions would be too big – Harrison would have the same portions as me.

"Nowadays he'll usually have eggs with some vegetables for breakfast, a wholemeal wrap with salad for lunch and for tea, some meat and vegetables."

Kerry with son Harrison

They decided to start an Instagram page as they wanted to find people in a similar situation and also hold themselves accountable.

Plus, they wanted to get their experience out there and find other families going through the same thing. Kerry said: "I'm so proud of what he's achieved."

WBA legend Jesse's gold medal set for auction

THE rare and precious gold medal awarded to West Bromwich Albion captain Jesse Pennington after he led the Baggies to their first and, so far only, football league title in 1919-1920 is set to fetch at least £6,000 at an auction.

Jesse Pennington

The West Bromwich-born left back,one of Albion's all time greats and affectionately known as 'Peerless Pennington', was 36 when he led the Baggies to their historic first league title in 1920.

Now, nearly nearly 100 years later his medals, caps, gold pocket watch and his other rare WBA mementoes, are expected to sell for between £38,000 and £50,000 at Graham Budd Auctions in London next Tuesday.

It is thought to be one of the finest Albion collections ever to come up for sale at an auction. The most valuable item in the Pennington collection is his gold 1919-1920 Football League Division One Champions medal, which alone is expected to sell for between £6,000 and £8,000 at the imminent auction. The medal is engraved 'The Football League Champions Division 1, West Bromwich Albion F.C.1919-20, J.Pennington,captain'.

Albion didn't simply win the league title that season. They won it in record-breaking fashion. Their 104 goals in 42 league matches and their points total of 60 set new records.

In a poll conducted in 2004, to mark Albion's 125th anniversary, Pennington, was named as one of the club's 16 greatest players.

So many lovely pictures, soon time to decide

Puppy Milo likes to climb in his toy box

Bob pops in to see the goldfish

Cinnamon and Nutmeg are best friends

Penny and Bella having a cuddle

Charlie out in the back garden

Archie enjoys a run on the beach

Countdown now on for the final judging

WELL this is the last week we will be carrying pictures of all your adorable pets – for now.

But do not despair. If your pet has not featured on our weekly competition page that does not mean that it will not be included in the shortlist for the final judging.

Keep an eye out for the shortlist of 10 which will be appearing in our editions of Thursday, November 30 and Thursday, December 7.

ANIMAL CRACKERS

Then it will be up to you readers to let us know what you think. We are looking for the most interesting picture.

When we print the shortlist we will include details of how to vote so keep your eye out.

As well as the £100 prize the winner will feature on the front page of our Christmas week editions.

Over the weeks we have had hundreds of entries of all sorts of different pets. Some out walking, some playing, lots eating and enjoying a snooze, but one thing has become very clear – just how much these pets are loved. Thanks for all your entries.

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Pioneering new centre on shortlist for award

A HOSPITAL'S new rare diseases centre which will open next year has already been shortlisted for a national award.

Birmingham Children's Hospital's pioneering new rare diseases centre for children and young people is due to open its doors early in 2018.

The new centre will be part of a new on-site £37.5 million Waterfall House clinical block, which will also include a cancer centre and additional surgical theatres. Judges at this year's Health Service Journal (HSJ) Awards have included it on the shortlist in the Compassionate Patient Care category.

Sarah-Jane Marsh, chief executive at Birmingham Women's and Children's NHS Foundation Trust, said: "Our new rare diseases centre will be the first of its kind in the world and we could not be more proud that it has been recognised by the HSJ in this way.

The potentially award-winning design of the new rare diseases centre

An idea of the interior of the new block at Birmingham Children's Hospital

Target

"The difference our centre will make to thousands of our children and young people will be huge and we cannot wait to start welcoming patients and families in a few months' time.

"We are also keeping our fingers crossed that the team come away with the award on the night."

The new rare diseases centre for children has been made possible thanks to the hospital charity's £3.65m Star Appeal, which officially closed earlier this summer after reaching its target in a little over 18 months.

Dr Larissa Kerecuk, who is the rare diseases lead at the trust, explained: "There's been so much hard work already to turn what was an ambitious vision for our new dedicated rare disease centre for children into a reality.

"There's still a lot of work going on behind the scenes ahead of us officially opening the doors to patients and families early next year, but this nomination is a tremendous boost for everyone involved."

This year's ceremony, where the winners of the award will be announced, will take place in London on November 22.

Emily is one to watch after apprenticeship

IN just one year energetic Emily Stubbs has shown how far you can climb when you are pursuing your dream.

For the bubbly 18-year-old took a role on at City Hospital as an apprentice and has now landed a permanent job as an assistant physiologist.

It's a family affair for Emily working in the NHS as her mum works as a ward sister at Sandwell Hospital, her dad is a senior capacity manager at City Hospital, and her sister works for West Midlands Ambulance Service.

She laughed: "Nearly everyone in my family works for the NHS! We sometimes joke that we are a mini hospital. Even my nan used to work for the NHS."

Checklist

Emily was quick to impress bosses at Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust with her creativity and hard work – by designing a specialist checklist and log to keep track of the tools needed within the respiratory team where she works.

She explained: "I came up with the idea of the log to help our service run more smoothly, and also helped design another checklist to ensure that we have all the details we need when we send equipment to other departments, helping us communicate more effectively.

"Luckily, my ideas have been well-received by the team and have already been implemented."

However, what has excited Emily the most whilst working at the trust, are the people she has met.

She said: "In our department, we help patients who have difficulty breathing during sleep.

NHS HEROES

ONCE again we focus some of our time on the quiet heroes of the NHS, from a wide variety of backgrounds doing a wide variety of jobs.

Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust is one of the Black Country's largest NHS organisations. It employs 7,500 people, many of whom live locally.

Last year, the trust provides care from 150 locations.

This week we highlight:
EMILY STUBBS
Assistant physiologist

"As I work on the front desk and also help with the clinic, I meet patients on their first visit and am able to witness their progress on following visits as they gradually get better.

"It's a worthwhile feeling as you know that you have been part of their recovery and I feel really proud of my team."

Emily finished her apprenticeship earlier this year and knew what career she wanted to pursue.

She said: "After I finished the apprenticeship, my interest for respiratory care had been ignited and I wanted to advance in this field.

"So when the team advertised the assistant physiologist role, I did not hesitate to apply. I am very excited about my new role, as not only do I get to do more clinical work, I also go on courses to learn further knowledge and skills to help me to do my job well.

"I definitely would like to be a specialist in the respiratory field as I want to help people get better."

Emily would encourage other young people to consider an apprenticeship at the trust.

"I really think an apprenticeship is a great opportunity to give you the experience that you need. You will never know if you like the career if you don't give it a try. I felt very supported during my apprenticeship, and can highly recommend the scheme."

If you would like to apply for the apprenticeship, please contact Libby Marshall, Apprenticeship Co-ordinator, at: libby.marshall@nhs.net

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Choir celebrate 25th anniversary in style

ONE of the largest chamber choirs in the country is warming up to celebrate its leader's 25th anniversary at the helm in style.

Renowned conductor Paul Spicer celebrates a quarter of a century leading Birmingham Bach Choir with a special anniversary concert on November 30 at Birmingham Town Hall.

Fittingly, for a choir named in honour of Baroque composer Johann Sebastian Bach, Paul has chosen Bach's masterful Mass In B Minor for the performance.

"Bach's B minor Mass is quite simply one of the greatest creations of the human mind," he said ahead of the concert.

"It has been central to my musical career ever since Birmingham Bach Choir's previous musical director, Richard Butt, brought back a full score of the work from Leipzig as a gift for me back in 1988.

"Since then I have conducted the work many times. As I have said before, I feel that Bach is the only universal composer." Completed in 1749, a year before JS Bach's death, Mass In B minor (BWV 232) revisits previously composed passages and was only performed publicly, in full, a century later.

Since becoming Birmingham Bach Choir's musical director in 1992, Paul has extended their repertoire to cover both contemporary and centuries old, lesser-known works alongside more popular, well-known choral pieces.

For the 25th anniversary concert, Birmingham Bach Choir are joined by the London Baroque Sinfonia, with Sarah Fox (soprano), James Laing (countertenor), Robert Murray (tenor) and Ashley Riches (bass) lending their voices to the ensemble.

Tickets for the choral spectacular start from £12.50 and range up to £25. The concert will begin at 7.30pm.

Tickets can be purchased via www.birmingham.bachchoir.com

The Birmingham Bach Choir will be performing at the city's Town Hall venue

Awards handed out for help to fight loneliness in city

VOLUNTEERS have been rewarded for the work they are doing to battle loneliness.

Citizens at the heart of Ageing Better in Birmingham, a programme set up to tackle isolation in the over 50s, have received awards recognising their work setting up activities and supporting older people. So far, more than 100 volunteers started projects within their communities to help people lead more fulfilling lives.

Stephen Raybould, Ageing Better in Birmingham programme director, said: "The lingering sadness of loneliness can be a cruel and crippling feeling, which affects more people than we realise. Never underestimate the power of human contact and how many people may not have that day to day.

"To have all these volunteers recognise the importance of helping others who feel alone and working hard to tackle loneliness in Birmingham is overwhelming. All of our volunteers have gone above and beyond in their communities. Their hard work and dedication is truly commendable and I would like to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to everyone involved.

"This is a great opportunity to recognise individuals for everything they have done for the lonely people of the city."

Peaky star Murphy up for film of TV drama

PEAKY Blinders star Cillian Murphy has said he would be up for a big screen adaptation of the hit show – but not a musical

There have been reports that the BBC drama, which has filmed at the Black Country Living Museum, could be adapted for the West End stage.

Asked about taking part, Murphy, who plays Thomas Shelby in the gangster drama, said: "I heard about that... that's not for me."

He is more likely to sign up for a big-screen version of the Birmingham-set drama. Murphy added: "In theory, yeah. Absolutely, if the writing is as good as it is for the show, then for sure."

Cillian Murphy in civvies

Peaky Blinders, also starring Helen McCrory as Aunt Polly, returns to BBC Two with Adrien Brody joining the cast. The US actor said growing up in Queens, New York was 'wonderful ammunition' for his screen characters.

"I have many experiences and truths to draw from, that you might think are far fetched to be in a film, and I find it remarkable what there is to draw from and I'm grateful for that," the star of King Kong and The Pianist said.

Meanwhile, McCrory said that she would never tell a director that her character would not do something in the script. "I have worked with actors that come on set and they go 'my character wouldn't say that' and you go 'guess what, your character just did'," she said.

The latest series, set two years after the third season in 1924, follows the gang's attempts to expand internationally. It stars Murphy as leader Tommy Shelby, Anderson as Arthur Shelby and McCrory as Aunt Polly.

Newcomer Aidan Gillen, famous for being Petyr Baelish in Game of Thrones, is Aberama Gold. Creator and director Steven Knight was born in Birmingham.

The stars of Peaky Blinders, including the likes of Murphy, descended on Birmingham for the premiere of the fourth season of the show recently.

The fourth series sees Tommy Shelby pursued by a new enemy who threatens to annihilate his entire family.

Warehouse gym plan

A FORMER warehouse in Wednesbury will be transformed into a gym and cafe. The empty site on Old Park Industrial Estate will work alongside businesses in the region to create jobs and better lifestyles for families.

It is a new venture for Wednesbury businessmen Pally and Satnam Sagoo. They said: "We want to work alongside Sandwell Council in this venture and hopefully create a base that will be social as well as health and wellbeing."

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LEBUS Ogilvy 3 seater pillow back sofa, chair and stool	~~£1699~~ £789
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Hospital Trust to stand by Carillion

FINANCIAL troubles at Carillion should not put a new £350 million 'super hospital' at risk, health chiefs have said.

The chief executive of Sandwell's hospital trust said he was confident the Midland Metropolitan Hospital, currently being built in Smethwick, would be completed despite difficulties at the Wolverhampton-based firm.

The opening of the Midland Met, which will replace Sandwell General as the main hospital in the borough, has already been delayed by at least six months to spring 2019, due to engineering problems, including fitting pipes and wires.

Obligations

Toby Lewis, chief executive of the Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust, which will run the Midland Met, said the construction giant had 'financial governance' in place and that he 'felt confident that they will meet obligations for the next two years'.

Carillion was hit by gloomy forecasts of major job losses amid massive cost-cutting at the firm last month.

It is thought Midland Met is one of four 'challenging' contracts that account for about half of an £845 million write-down in the value of Carillion's construction work. The company announced the sale of more assets this week in a bid to shore up its finances.

But Sandwell hospital bosses say they remain confident despite the troubles at Carillion.

Parents' penalties top £1m for school term holidays

PARENTS have been hit by more than £1 million in fines for taking their children on school term time holidays.

But figures released show discrepancies between councils for the amount of fines collected – with Walsall Council picking up almost £230,000,Wolverhampton around £128,000 and Sandwell just £39,000.

More than 22,000 parents have been issued with the £60 charge over the last five years in the West Midlands, with another 2,000 being taken to court because of their child's low attendance.

Figures obtained under the Freedom of Information Act show Walsall Council has collected £227,310 in fines since 2012/13.

Wolverhampton Council made £128,200, Dudley £44,100, and Sandwell £39,120. Staffordshire County Council collected £102,080 over the past two years.

Sandwell Council took 817 parents to court since 2012/13 rather than issue fixed penalties. Fines collected in court rather than through fixed penalty notices go to the Ministry of Justice instead of the council.

Flexible

The councils were described as carrying out 'scandalous money grabbing' by West Midland Liberal Democrat campaigner Sarah Quarmby, who compiled the data after submitting the FOI request. She demanded more flexible arrangements to help parents.

Patrick Harley, leader of Dudley Council, said authorities had to enforce the law but called on headteachers to use 'discretion' where possible. He said: "We understand the financial pressures on parents taking children on holiday during half term and school holidays. Headteachers do have a limited amount of discretion that they should use sensibly."

Thousands of parents in the West Midlands are willing to run the risk of a £60 fine per child while slashing their getaway costs.

Sarah Quarmby, who compiled the statistics, said: "Many parents have no choice. People in some jobs have to work all through the summer. Others simply cannot afford to go on holiday at peak times We believe that headteachers should be allowed to grant up to 10 days of term-time absence."

By law all children aged between five and 16 must receive a 'suitable full-time education'.

Headteachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Houses staying on market for longer

PROPERTIES are staying on the market for longer across parts of the region, according to figures. Wolverhampton and Walsall were revealed as two areas in the UK suffering from some of the slowest-moving markets.

Online estate agents HouseSimple.com looked at the length of time properties have been on the market since estate agents first listed them, in 50 major towns and cities.

Sunderland was bottom for the slowest moving with 28.5 per cent of properties currently for sale on the market six months or longer, across the UK it was 12.5 per cent.

Fastest

For Wolverhampton, it was 17.4 per cent and in Walsall 16.5 per cent. have been on the market six months or more, and 7.2 per cent for more than a year.

The fastest moving property market, according to HouseSimple research, is Belfast.

Alex Gosling, chief executive of HouseSimple.com, said "Across the five towns and cities we looked at, the length of time it is taking for properties to sell appears to be falling. Eight months ago, when we carried out the same research, 13 per cent of properties listed had been on the market at least six months. That has now fallen to 12.5 per cent."

MP puts his energy into cutting costs

Giving advice to Ronald Naylor, aged 88, is Pat McFadden MP, and Andrea Webster, from Bilston Energy

AN MP hosted a utilities advice day which has become an annual event. Pat McFadden, who represents Wolverhampton South East, invited a number of energy providers and local constituents to Bilston Town Hall.

The aim was to save residents money on their gas and electricity bills.

Among those who took up the offer of advice were Sandra and Alan Evans, of Coseley, who switched energy providers as a result, making a huge annual saving. Mr Evans said: "I'm really glad I came down. We've managed to switch providers and save £168. A big thanks to Pat."

Mr McFadden said: "I don't have a candle to burn for any of the individual energy companies, I just want to get my constituents the best deal possible.

"I know some people fear using their heating as much as they should because of the cost and the reason that I organise this annual event is to ensure local people get the best possible deal."

Residents brought along their bills to get guidance on which tariffs were best for them and clarity around charges they are paying.

Discussions on the role of hospices

MORE than 200 people from hospices and health organisations across the Midlands attended an annual conference run by a city charity.

Compton Hospice's annual conference, entitled Thinking Differently About Palliative and End of Life Care took place at Wolverhampton Science Park. It explored creative approaches to designing and delivering palliative and end-of-life care, with a focus on non-malignant conditions, and considered the role of hospices both now and in the future.

There were also representatives from organisations, including Wolverhampton Lymphoedema Service, Motor Neurone Disease Association, Wolverhampton MS Therapy Centre and Healthwatch Wolverhampton.

Dr Katherine Birch, head of education and development, said: "At Compton, our aim is to ensure that everyone receives the high-quality and personalised care they deserve."

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Artist Betti's bearing up after Sleuth sale success

SHE designed a bear for charity – and then bid to bring it back to her home town.

Bewdley-based artist Betti Moretti worked long and hard hours to craft the 'Bear it in Mindfulness' for The Big Sleuth Project but couldn't say goodbye.

She won back the 5ft 5in critter with a strong bid of more than £1,600 at The Big Sleuth auction at The Birmingham Science Museum – as more than a quarter of a million pounds was raised for Birmingham Children's Hospital Charity.

Betti Moretti, aged 47, said: "It was fantastic. It was lot number 79 and was quite near the end – I had £1,600 in the crowd funder and £44 in cash.

"The auctioneer started the bidding at £1,500 and I bid, somebody else then bid, it went up to £1,650 and I was £4 short.

"At that moment I had a tap on the shoulder from a London Midlands representative – they asked me how much I had and told me to just keep bidding.

"I didn't know them, I'd not met them until that moment.

"Nobody else bid on it so London Midland ended up giving me £10 and told me to spend the rest on a glass of wine. It was so hectic in that moment but liberating – I won it for £1,650. The auction itself raised over a quarter of a million for Birmingham Children's Hospital – they are fantastic.

"It's going to start it's life at St Georges Hall in Bewdley and then I'll look at a tour of Bewdley, both primary schools – St Anne's Church of England Primary and Bewdley Primary School – in the hope that it inspires the kids to get into art.

"Also potentially Bewdley High school and sixth form, the library and the medical centre, various restaurants and shops in the town too.

"As the bear does the tour of Bewdley, which in all honesty could take up to a year, I'm going to put something alongside it to raise funds for Birmingham Children's Hospital."

It was the kindness of residents that saw the bear make the journey back – with Bewdley removals driver Leon Wilks who sat in M6 traffic for three hours in a bid to bring the bear back free of charge. Betti said: "I'd seen him in town so he had heard me talking about the bear – the whole of Bewdley got behind the whole thing really.

"We're going to rename it to reflect Bewdley and the people of Bewdley – I'll run a Facebook poll on the This is Bewdley page."

Artist Betti Moretti from Bewdley, with daughter Coco and the bear that she created, 'Bear it in Mindfulness' which she bought at the Big Sleuth auction

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They said they'd restore my smile, but they gave me back my life

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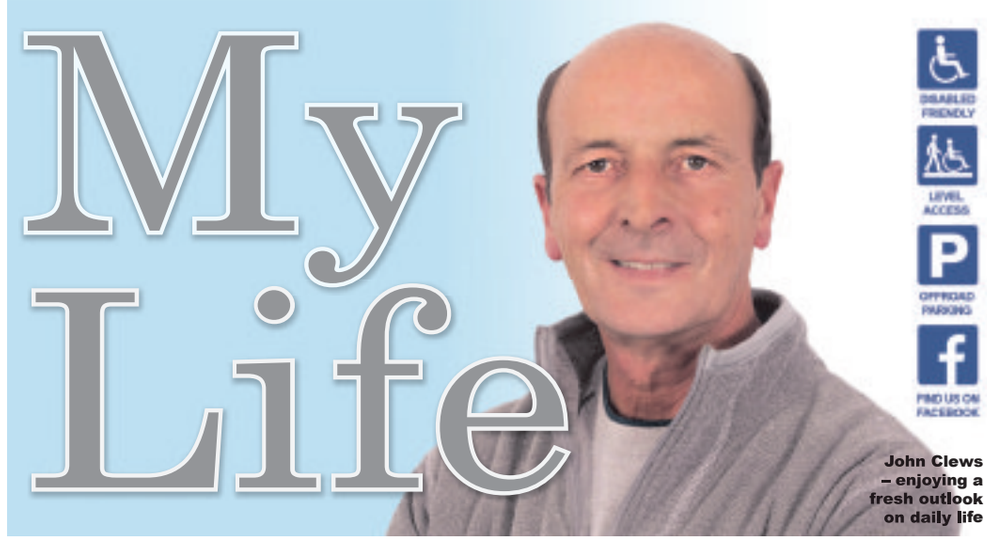

John Clews – enjoying a fresh outlook on daily life

WITH a memorable manly handshake, John Clews exudes a quiet, deep-seated confidence. Articulate, transparent and at times philosophical, he's sharply focussed on why he's agreed to do this interview: "I want to give people like me hope," he declares.

The die-sinker knows a thing or two about clever engineering – he's been helping to construct specialised aircraft parts for more than 46 years – but with multiple failing teeth, instinctively knew that he too required the kind of skill that sets him apart as an experienced factory problem-solver.

For years, gum disease had insidiously invaded his mouth until toothache had become part of his daily routine.

Not unusual

Intellectually, he knew he needed a dentist – and a good one – but gripped by a crippling fear he'd "pop the paracetamol" rather than face his demons.

"Fear is a terrible thing . . . I remember sitting in a dentist's chair and gripping the armrests so hard I pulled one of them off," John says.

"I came here and they promised to restore my smile, but they gave me back my life. It's true," he adds.

Practice principal Steven Burchell Dip CDT RCS Eng GDC 108353 explains: "Periodontal disease is the biggest single cause of tooth loss in the UK and John's case is not unusual.

"There is plenty of study that examines the psychological impact of troublesome teeth on our lives. But like the insidious nature of gum disease, it can happen slowly as we make small changes to accommodate oral decline. Eventually, however, as things become more acute we are less able to adapt."

Matters came to head three years ago when John's family booked a weekend break at the Brecon Beacons to do a waterfalls walk.

Adds John: "We take so many things for granted. We'd been walking a good few hours – we 'd had a lovely time – and we were all ready for something to eat. We came across a cafe serving bacon sandwiches. But they hadn't got any normal bread and the bacon was served with baguettes.

Lifestyle investment

"There was no way my teeth could have coped with the crusty bread so I ended up with a piece of cheesecake. I just so wanted a bacon sarnie, but my teeth had restricted my choice.

"That was it. At that point I decided to sort out my teeth.

"Too many times I'd go to a restaurant and look at 20 things on the menu and was only able to manage four of the choices. I'd really want steak, but I couldn't chew it: sometimes I just wouldn't go and eat out and I was always on my guard about smiling.

"And the toothache, the impact on daily living . . . it just drags you down and confidence wanes," he says.

> The implant teeth are great and I can eat whatever I want and go out for a meal whenever I want.

> *I'd go to a restaurant and look at 20 things on the menu and was only able to manage four of the choices.*

> It's a lifestyle investment for me and the difference it has made to my life is remarkable. It's a new kind of freedom.

> *All the staff were fantastic. I felt so much at ease. The people you meet here say a lot about the place.*

After having six implants in his upper jaw to support a complete arch of teeth and undergoing other remedial work, John is now able to live his life without having to worry about his teeth.

"The implant teeth are great and I can eat what I want, go out for a meal when I want and more than this . . . I've got my life back," says the keen carp fisherman.

Explaining he could have changed his car, John adds such an investment would be lost very quickly.

"This [the implants] has been a lifestyle investment for me and the difference it's made to my life is remarkable. It's a new kind of freedom." he says.

And his dental phobia? "All the staff were fantastic, I felt so much at ease."

The surgery was carried out by North Street's implant dentist Owain Rees BDS DGDP (UK) Dip Imp Dent (UCL) GDC 61576. Owain was in the vanguard of UK implant dentistry, placing his first in the late '80s.

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Flying in with 120 new jobs

JET2.COM has announced it is creating 120 jobs at Birmingham Airport. On the back of the continued growth of Jet2.com and Jet2holidays at the airport, which will see capacity more than double next summer, the company has taken all ramp-handling services in-house.

As a result, more than 120 new fixed-term and permanent jobs are now available to fill including in ramp management, baggage loading and dispatching for its summer 2018 programme.

They will be part of the ground operations team responsible for ensuring that flights depart safely and on time and providing a VIP service to customers.

Last week Jet2.com was named the most punctual airline in the UK over the past 12 months, according to travel intelligence company OAG, and was the only UK airline to be awarded a five star rating for on-time performance.

In addition to the ground operations positions, the company is also looking to recruit passenger service agents at Birmingham Airport.

Toilet block flats scheme

SHOPS and flats could be built on the site of a former toilet block which was at the centre of a council land sales storm.

An application has been lodged to put a three-storey block on the site of the old Shambles public toilets in Wednesbury. The block was among three council-owned toilets alleged to have been sold under value, which formed part of the controversial Wragge report, which outlined a series of code of conduct breaches at the authority.

Roaring back to Brum with dinosaurs' return

Michaela Strachan stars as Huxley the paleontologist, with a T-rex

Some of the animatronics creatures now feature feathers, in light of the latest research

DINOSAURS will once again roam the stage in Birmingham as Walking With Dinosaurs – The Arena Spectacular returns.

Starring Michaela Strachan as Huxley the paleontologist, the show is based on the award-winning BBC television series, with tickets now on sale.

The live show has been watched by over nine million people. The 20 million dollar production features new, state of the art technology, underlining its position as the biggest and best dinosaur show in the world. This updated production will showcase spectacular and colourful changes to the dinosaurs based on the latest scientific research including the likely feathering of some species.

The show is produced by Global Creatures, headed by CEO Carmen Pavlovic, who said: "A new generation is ready to experience these lifesize beasts in this awe-inspiring spectacle, which has still not been matched in terms of scale and quality.

"Many of our creatures have 'evolved' since the last tour, now featuring distinctive display feathers, head crests and tail fans, reflecting recent discoveries about the physical nature of these massive creatures." The show depicts the dinosaurs' evolution with almost cinematic realism. It has scenes of the interactions between dinosaurs, how carnivorous dinosaurs evolved to walk on two legs, and how the herbivores fended off their more agile predators.

Nine species are represented from the entire 200 million year reign of the dinosaurs. The show includes the Tyrannosaurus Rex, the terror of the ancient terrain, as well as the Plateosaurus and Liliensternus from the Triassic period, the Stegosaurus and Allosaurus from the Jurassic period and Torosaurus and Utahraptor from the awesome Cretaceous period. The largest of them, the Brachiosaurus, is 11 metres tall and 17 metres from nose to tail. It took a team of 50 – including engineers, fabricators, skin makers, artists and painters, and animatronic experts – a year to build. The history of the world is played out with the splitting of the earth's continents, and the transition from the arid desert of the Triassic period is given over to the lush green prairies and forces of the later Jurassic.

Walking With Dinosaurs – The Arena Spectacular will come to Arena Birmingham from July 26-28, 2018. Tickets go on sale from 10am on Friday, November 3.

Festival will bring business together

FIRMS are being invited to find out how they could be part of a major business event coming to the Black Country next year.

The Black Country Business Festival will bring companies together to learn from each other and identify opportunities for growth.

The two-week festival will take place in April and May next year and the event is being held in December allowing companies to find out how they can get involved. Bosses will be able to run their own events during the festival, showcasing their business.

Organiser Associate Events is running a free workshop on Wednesday, December 6 at the Midland Metropolitan Hospital in Smethwick between 2pm and 3.30pm.

Useful

Alister De Ternant, managing director of Associate Events said: "The workshop is for any business or organisation in the Black Country and it is completely free to anyone to come along to.

"We want people to use this time to come and find out more about the Business Festival and how to put on a really useful business event with stimulating, engaging content that will be attractive to the audience and that people will want to attend."

Numbers are limited so registration is essential. Visit www.blackcountrybusinessfestival.com/rsvp to register or email hello@associate-events.com.

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This service costs £26.49 per day with a subscription charge of £8.50 per day for activities,transport and meals. Lunch club drop in sessions are also available to any older person who wishes to attend social activities and make new friends.

This costs £15.50 per day for activities and meals plus £2 for transport if required. Taster sessions are available so call now on 0121 525 2499 to arrange your place.

Volunteering with Age UK Day Care. We are always looking for people who can help us at our Day Centre, making cups of tea, helping out in the kitchen or running an activity session.

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On track to clear the way for Metro

A contractor seen at work on the former South Staffordshire railway line near Dudley Port in Tipton

WORK to clear a disused railway track ahead of the opening of a new Midland Metro line is continuing.

The above picture shows contractors for the Midlands Metro Alliance working on a stretch of the former South Staffordshire railway line near Dudley Port railway station in Tipton. They are clearing vegetation from the track, last used by passengers in 1965 and officially closed 1993.

The line goes under a canal and the Wolverhampton to Birmingham railway line. The track will form part of the Midland Metro Line from Wednesbury to Brierley Hill.

Work on the tramline will start in 2019 after the scheme was approved by the Transport Secretary Chris Grayling. A Midlands Metro Alliance spokesman said: "Preliminary works are currently taking place which involve Network Rail being onsite to remove the existing rails."

The £200 million line will feature 17 stops between Wednesbury and Brierley Hill town centre.

NHS trust chief 'not surprised' at rating

THE boss of the trust which runs under-fire Sandwell General Hospital has said he is 'not surprised' at a report which has told it to improve.

Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust has been given a list of actions to take by the Care Quality Commission, which rated it 'requiring improvement'.

The CQC found urgent and emergency services at the hospital must improve along with services for children and young people.

But it found medical care, surgery, critical care and outpatients and diagnostic imaging to be 'good.

End-of-life care was rated 'outstanding'.

But overall, the hospital 'required improvement', according to the inspection report which followed visits this year.

Speaking about the overall rating of requiring improvement, Toby Lewis, chief executive of the trust said: "I am not surprised by it but I am not satisfied with it. I'm really pleased with the improvements in the report. Of course we want to

By Alex Ross

be rated good or outstanding. There are one or two areas where we have still got issues but the fact the inadequate rating around safety and now end of life services are outstanding is a cause for real pleasure and tribute to our staff.

"The biggest thing in the report is the care of staff is rated as outstanding, Most trusts have got 'good' for being caring. Outstanding for caring is not what most people have got."

He added: "70 per cent of our services are rated good or outstanding. We are rated as requires improvement like every other hospital provision in the Black Country. We are fighting to improve that position."

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Homes plan for site of troubled pub

HOMES could be built on the site of a former pub which was blighted by trouble before it was knocked down.

Nine houses will be built on the site of the old Lagoon pub, in High Street, Princes End, Tipton, if the plans are given the go-ahead.

The pub was the scene of trouble, which resulted in the police trying to shut it down. It closed in 2007 and was bulldozed two years later. Now plans have gone in for five two-bedroom houses and four three-bedroom houses, along with off-street parking.

The pub became an eyesore following its closure and was regularly targeted by arsonists, while squatters also broke into the premises. Police launched action against the pub over a series of violent incidents.

Music and laughs due

A FUNDRAISING event takes in Tipton on November 17. An Evening of Music and Laughter will be at Tipton Community Centre in Brook Street. The show begins at 7.30pm.

Tickets cost £11.

It will raise money for Coseley Support Group, which has raised £91,000 over the past 28 years for patients at hospices and in their own homes. For details contact Iris Gamble 01902 883132.

FOCUS ON TIPTON

Doreen takes a break and wings it over to care home

Focusing on the past at museum

IT is one of the region's best loved and most photographed attractions. So, to mark its 40th anniversary, the Black Country Living Museum launched a photographic competition to show the site at its best.

Visitors were urged to snap their own shots at the Tipton Road museum and submit them for the 2018 calendar. Now the winners have been chosen. They are Stacy Woolhouse, Derek Barrett, Tony Carwithen, Robert Herringshaw, Derek Barrett, Neil Brinsdon, Stephen Davis, Gary Portman, Stephen Davis, Gary Crutchley, Paul Lucas, and Roger Bowater.

Among the winning photos is this atmospheric shot of the museum's ever-popular fairground.

The calendar can be ordered on the bclm.co.uk website.

Gary Crutchley captured this stunning shot of the museum's fairground

BLACK Country comic Doreen Tipton took a break from her one woman show to open a new wing at a care home.

Doreen, who will star in the panto at The Grand Theatre later this year, visited Veronica House in Tipton to open the wing which has been designed to help care for people with dementia.

Care home manager Marc Cohen said Doreen 'was a really warm and funny lady' and her comedic antics helped make the opening a success and the residents enjoyed her visit.

Doreen took the time to chat to residents and also orchestrated a sing-a-long with residents including 'We'll Meet Again' by Vera Lynn.

The comedienne brought along some ribbon and a pair of scissors to commemorate the opening of the new wing of the nursing home which now features a 'plaque' to commemorate her visit and also the opening of the wing.

Bosses said the new wing will mean residents will be able to receive better care as their needs will be specifically cared for.

Later this year Doreen will star in the panto performance of 'Jack and the Beanstalk' at the Grand.

Doreen Tipton, with manager Marc Cohen and owner Veronica Lovell, of Wednesbury

Her role in this year's panto follows on from her successful cameo in last year's panto performance of Aladdin where she played 'The Lazy Empress' and was named 'Best Panto Newcomer'.

To find out more about Veronica House nursing home contact 0121 505 1110.

Officials and police in swoops

A BLITZ on illegal immigants and counterfeit tobacco was carried out by trading standards officials and police in Sandwell.

Councillor Elaine Costigan joined police and officials on the swoops. The cabinet member for public health and protection said arrests were made.

She said: "The operation is looking at modern slavery and illegal cigarettes. It is a massive process. We are out there. I think it is serious people can think can sell illegal cigarettes under their counters. They want to be careful. Our teams are out and about."

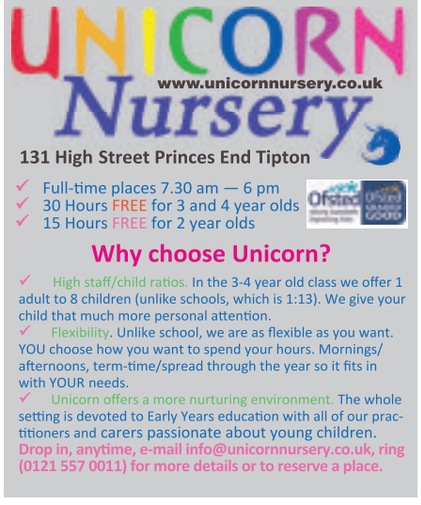
She joined teams from Sandwell Council and West Midlands Police which targeted premises in the Charlemont Farm and Great Bridge. She said it was important the public was aware of the operations taking place.

Cilla tribute set for stage

A HOSPICE support group will be holding a variety night in the coming weeks,

Julie Scott will perform as Cilla Black and comedian Doug Parker will also be appearing at the event hosted by the Coseley support group for Compton Hospice.

The evening will start at 8pm on November 17 and take place at Brook Street Community Centre, Tipton. Tickets are £11.



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Noddy and I have had a hell of a life

You'd expect him to be the showiest of all of the members of Slade. After all, Dave Hill made a career from modelling silver wigs and platform boots. He was the brightest star in Slade's firmament, the one who'd dress most outrageously, who'd model a great scooping fringe for more years than was sensible.

Yet Dave Hill is as far removed from the caricature as is possible. Our scheduled 15-minute chat turns into 45. And the subjects aren't just Rolls Royces and drink, six number one singles and outrageous apparel – Dave talks about depression and importance of our shared history, about his deep, deep affection for the Black Country and a long-lasting marriage.

The man nicknamed Superyob who rocked the world with Slade is more sensitive and thoughtful than anyone might imagine. Yes, there's Merry Xmas Everybody and six smash LPs in his new book, So Here It Is, which is published this month by Unbound. But there's also talk about post-War Britain and his office job at Tarmac, about sliding into depression during his later years and suffering a stroke, there's an honest assessment of Slade's split – to paraphrase, everyone started to hate Noddy, though Dave and Nod are the best of pals again now – and there's the slow revealing of a gentle soul.

Superyob? Dave Hill. You're having a larf.

"I was born in a castle and then grew up in a council house in Wolverhampton. I had a smashing mum and dad but things were tough growing up in post-War Britain. My life really changed when I heard rock'n'roll music. I said goodbye to an office job at Tarmac and never looked back. I played in various groups before fame came knocking at my door.

"Slade's success didn't happen overnight but boy, were we big when we took off! We had 23 top twenty hits and six number one singles. Three of these went straight to the number one spot – a first, not even matched by The Beatles. Topping it all was Merry Xmas Everybody, which sold over one million copies. We also had six smash LPs, and one time had the number one and two spots on the LP chart. All this made Slade the biggest band in the UK in the 70s, and we were massive all over the world, too.

"Slade had some great years but fashions change and the break-up of the original band was heartbreaking. I thought that would be it for me.

"I battled through depression and got over a stroke, and decided to carry on doing the thing which I do best: I went back on the road with Slade. I've seen more of the world, and more fans, in the last 25 years than I did when the band were at their most famous."

Back in the day – Slade in the early 70s

I was in a dark place – I had two years of really bad depression

Dave's autobiography, inevitably, was created in his beloved Black Country. He met a writer, from Walsall, who was a big Slade fan and encouraged him to jot down his memories. Publishers were slow on the uptake so they took it to Unbound, the pledge-funded organisation. Dave smashed his target – achieving 116 per cent funding from 564 backers.

"It was a nice process. If I'd been with a different publisher, they'd have been telling me what to write. With these guys, I was just allowed to get on with it. I worked with a ghostwriter, he was from Wednesbury. It was important to do it that way. I was working with somebody who understood the way I talk and who related to my upbringing."

Dave didn't just want to write about the good times. He wanted to tell the truth, to write down his experience of mental health issues.

"The Slade years were incredible. We had the most original Christmas song. We influenced a lot of people. Those years took me to destinations I wouldn't have dreamed of. Everything was good until the break-up of the band.

"I didn't know what I was going to do. But I'd got a good wife and three children. I had a lot to carry on for."

Dave is more candid in his book about the break-up than others have been.

"I spoke to Nod about it, he keeps in touch. He said nobody's really written how the split was. So I did my best to write about how it was. Nod and myself have one heck of a life. We have a love for each other. We didn't agree with everything but we agreed with one thing, to be in a great band. We achieved that. Slade were a great rock'n'roll band. We had uniqueness and an honesty.

"With Nod, there was the realisation that he was going to go. And back then, when I weighed it up, maybe there wasn't any love for him in the band any more. He had to do what he had to do. In the early days it was like we were glued together. But we loved it and we're mates now. We'll always be known for it, especially Nod and myself."

Dave's book is equally remarkable for his exploration of depression, which followed routine surgery.

"I was in a dark place for a while. I had two years of really bad depression and was wondering whether I would ever feel good again. It was scary, it was hard on the family. I didn't trust medication. I found the right person who helped me, a great psychiatrist, who knew about medication. She was a specialist in her area and great to talk to. She told me I was 100 per cent depressed."

The joy returned when he listed to some old 60s music in his car. "The music gave me that joy inside. I went on a shopping spree buying clothes, I was Dave Hill again, that bloke, going out and getting stuff. The dark areas faded away. But I've wrote about that in the book."

Andy Richardson

● **So Here It Is: How the Boy From Wolverhampton Rocked the World With Slade, by Dave Hill, is published by Unbound on November 16.**

● **For more entertainment news and reviews see The Ticket in your Express & Star every Friday.**

Wolverhampton's Lions of Dissent

Lions of Dissent are the complete package

Lions of Dissent self produce and create everything themselves, including the lyrics, music, studio production, video production, art design and website as well as screen printing T-shirts and curating photo shoots.

Currently with 10 members, the group which formed in 2015 features a creative director, songwriters, musicians, producers, filmmakers, web developers and graphic designers.

Speaking about the group's collective philosophy, lead songwriter Tim Baker says 'It's not only through absolute necessity, but an essential part of the ethos that we create everything ourselves – constructing and expanding our own universe piece by piece and inviting everybody to step inside as they pass us by'.

Having gained praise from the likes of Simon Raymonde (owner of Bella Union Records), Anton Newcombe (Brian Jonestown Massacre) and Simone Marie Butler (Primal Scream) the group have also attracted international interest.

After releasing seven videos on YouTube, tracks such as X Y Z and Heaven Sent have amassed over 6000 views to build an audience and reputation. This has allowed them to release their debut EP 'What Would It Feel Like To Be Free' this week on their own label Lion Rebel Recordings.

Now Lions of Dissent have announced their debut live show taking place in their home city at the Newhampton Arts Centre tomorrow night (Friday).

Wolf Alice ready to rock Academy

The gig of the week sees Wolf Alice in concert at Birmingham's O2 Academy on Thursday, November 16.

Since their debut My Love Is Cool in 2015 and a storming Glastonbury set last year, this London outfit have become the UK's premier indie rock band – blending shoegaze guitar swirl with grungy hard rock. The four piece fronted by Ellie Rowsell, pictured, a month ago released second album Visions of a Life and won more fans with an appearance on Jools Holland's TV show.

And it's worth turning up early to catch their tour supports Superfood – returning to their home city – and New York trio Sunflower Bean.

Fans have two chances to catch singer-songwriter Newton Faulkner, at the O2 Institute in Digbeth, Birmingham, on Saturday or Wolverhampton Slade Rooms on Tuesday. He has released sixth studio album, Hit The Ground Running.

Mods will be out in force at the Robin 2 for a double bill of Secret Affair and The Chords on Saturday. Expect to be dazzled by the light show when space rockers The Hawklords, featuring ex-members of Hawkwind, play the Bilston venue on Sunday. John 'Drumbo' French, a former colleague of experimental blues artist Captain Beefheart brings an incarnation of the late captain's Magic Band to the Robin on Monday during their farewell tour.

Afro Celt Sound System and The Dhol Foundation are at Birmingham Town Hall tomorrow (Friday) and The Bard of Barking Billy Bragg is at that venue on Saturday.

Three legends perform in Birmingham including, on Monday, Blondie (Arena Birmingham) and Van Morrison (Symphony Hall) then Alice Cooper on Tuesday (Arena Birmingham).

Perfect role for Strictly's Danny

Andrew Lloyd Webber's Sunset Boulevard is at Birmingham Hippodrome from Monday to Saturday with Hollyoaks actor and Strictly Come Dancing finalist Danny Mac.

Mac plays Joe Gillis, a down-on-his-luck writer who stumbles into the deluded world of faded silent movie queen Norma Desmond, played by stage star Ria Jones. The show features the songs The Perfect Year and With One Look. For tickets see birminghamhippodrome.com or call 0844 338 5000.

The comedy just keeps on coming

It's been a funny old autumn, with comedy festivals in Wolverhampton and Birmingham, but the laughs keep on coming.

Following his sold-out show at Wolverhampton Civic Hall this week, Liverpudlian comic, actor and presenter John Bishop brings his Winging It tour to Arena Birmingham tomorrow (Friday) for the first of three consecutive nights.

Wolverhampton's Arena Theatre hosts Brummie Jo Enright with her Erdington Girl show tomorrow night.

Comedian and activist Mark Thomas brings his Show That Gambles On The Future, his vision of what the world could hold in store, to the MAC in Cannon Hill Park, Edgbaston, next Thursday, November 16. The following night James Cook's new stand-up show Too Many Jameses is at the MAC's Hegagon Theatre.

SANDWELL CHRONICLE PUB OF THE YEAR

Recently the Sandwell Chronicle ran the Pub Of The Year Competition.

The Winner this year was Curry N Grill which is owned by Mr Kuldip Johal.The Manager of the Curry N Grill Sunil Kumar said 'We are extremely proud of this award as the pub is the hub of the community and it's great to see that our hard work is appreciated by the local people'.

Mr Kumar was presented with the Pub Of The Year certificate from the Sandwell Chronicle Entertainment Executive Daniel Eccles.

The Curry N Grill is at Walsall Road, west Bromwich - get yourselves down to Sandwell's Pub Of The Year - You won't be disappointed!

SATURDAY'S TV NOVEMBER 11

CHOICE

Alfie Boe

Royal British Legion Festival of Remembrance 2017 (BBC1, 9pm)

The Royal Albert Hall in London hosts the annual Festival of Remembrance. Huw Edwards narrates the event as the likes of Tom Odell, Alfie Boe and Lesley Garrett take to the iconic stage alongside the Queen's Colour Squadron and the Royal Marines Band. They will be paying tribute to the men and women who have died in combat since the First World War. The event concludes with the now-iconic poppy petal shower, which sees thousands of poppy petals rain down on the assembled audience - among which sits Her Majesty the Queen - as a symbol of each life lost. Tomorrow morning the annual National Service of Remembrance will take place at the Cenotaph and will be covered by BBC One from 10.20am.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **9.15** Saturday Kitchen Live. **10.45** Lord Mayor's Show 2017. **12.05** Football Focus. **12.35** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Rugby League World Cup. **2.00** Live International Rugby Union. Scotland v Samoa (Kick-off 2.30pm). **4.30** Escape to the Country. (R) **5.00** Len Goodman's Partners in Rhyme. **5.35** BBC News. **5.45** Regional Programme. **5.55** Pointless Celebrities.

6.45 Strictly Come Dancing. The pro-celebrity couples face yet another round of high-pressure performances, as the competition enters its eighth weekend. Only nine duos remain, and Claudia Winkleman and Tess Daly present as the pairs once more take to the dancefloor to demonstrate whether a week of rigorous training has had any impact on their skills as dancers. This time, though, the pressure is higher than ever, as anyone who drops out of the contest this weekend will miss out on the chance to dance at Blackpool Tower Ballroom next week. As ever, judges Shirley Ballas, Bruno Tonioli, Craig Revel Horwood and Darcey Bussell preside over the contest, awarding each star a score that could give them a crucial lead in avoiding elimination following the public vote.

8.10 Casualty. Ethan's secret seems to have been discovered, but Connie's reluctance to treat her condition gives him a more urgent problem to tackle.

9.00 Royal British Legion Festival of Remembrance 2017. Huw Edwards hosts the annual Festival of Remembrance at London's Royal Albert Hall.

10.40 BBC News; Weather.; National Lottery Update.

11.00 Mrs Brown's Boys. Agnes looks after a robotic baby that has been given to Dermot and Maria to help them prepare for their new arrival, and Cathy develops a crush on her psychology lecturer. (R)

11.30 The NFL Show. Mark Chapman is joined by former players Osi Umenyiora and Jason Bell to present highlights of Thursday night's game, plus a look at the major stories shaping the NFL world.

12.00 Film: Three Fugitives. (1989) **1.35** Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.40** BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 Holiday of My Lifetime with Len Goodman. (R) **6.45** Animal Park Summer Special. (R) **7.30** Naomi's Nightmares of Nature. **8.00** Deadly 60. (R) **8.30** Show Me What You're Made Of. **9.00** Saturday Mash-Up!; Two Minutes Silence. **11.00** Rick Stein's Long Weekends. (R) **12.00** Nigella: At My Table. (R) **12.30** Italy Unpacked. (R) **1.30** Wild Brazil. (R) **2.30** Flog It! (R) **3.15** Mastermind. (R) **3.45** Cycling – Track World Cup. **4.45** Live International Rugby Union. Wales v Australia (Kick-off 5.15pm). John Inverdale introduces coverage from the Principality Stadium, as the hosts begin their autumn international campaign.

7.30 International Rugby Union. England v Argentina. Jason Mohammad presents highlights of the autumn international at Twickenham. With commentary by Andrew Cotter and Brian Moore, and analysis by Jeremy Guscott.

8.30 Dad's Army. A night at the cinema with the rest of the platoon and a black-market toasted cheese sandwich make Mainwaring have an unusual dream in which he is Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo. Comedy first broadcast in 1972, starring Arthur Lowe, John Le Mesurier and Clive Dunn. (R)

9.00 Film: Effie Gray. (2014) Premiere. A Victorian woman is trapped in a loveless marriage to a celebrated art critic from the age of 19. She becomes a model for a painter her husband is promoting and falls in love with him. Inspired by the relationship and aided by a respected writer, she creates scandal by becoming the first woman to seek a divorce. Fact-based period drama, starring Dakota Fanning and Emma Thompson.

10.40 QI XL. Bill Bailey, Jan Ravens and Grayson Perry join regular panellist Alan Davies and host Sandi Toksvig for an extended edition of the unconventional quiz.

11.25 Film: Private Peaceful. (2012) Two brothers' relationship is changed for ever when they serve in the First World War. Drama based on Michael Morpurgo's novel, starring Jack O'Connell.

1.00 Film: Free Men. (2011) An Algerian black marketeer in Nazi-occupied France is forced to become a spy, but ends up joining a resistance cell. Second World War drama, with Tahar Rahim and Michael Lonsdale. **2.35** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Sooty. **6.10** The Aquabats! Super Show! (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.45** Super 4. (R) **7.00** Mission Employable. (R) **7.05** Oddbods. (R) **7.10** Ultimate Spider-Man: Web Warriors. **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Fangbone. (R) **8.10** Scrambled!: The Powerpuff Girls. (R) **8.30** Scrambled!: Thunderbirds Are Go. **9.00** Scrambled!: Wishfart. (R) **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** Saturday Morning with James Martin. **11.30** Gino's Italian Coastal Escape. (R) **11.55** The Harbour. (R) **12.25** ITV News; Weather. **12.30** The X Factor. (R) **2.20** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **2.50** Midsomer Murders. (R) **4.40** Catchphrase. (R) **5.25** The Cruise. (R) **5.55** Paul O'Grady: For the Love of Dogs. (R)

6.25 Regional Programme; Weather.

6.30 ITV News; Weather.

6.45 New You've Been Framed! Harry Hill narrates a comical selection of mishaps filmed by viewers, including a drone flying into a child's face, a unicycling Scotsman and a builder being crushed by a wall.

7.10 Ninja Warrior UK. Ben Shephard, Rochelle Humes and Chris Kamara host the third heat, as competitors from across the UK test their strength, speed and courage in this obstacle-course challenge. (R)

8.10 The X Factor Live. Dermot O'Leary hosts as the talent contest enters its third weekend of live eliminations, and the remaining acts step on-stage to face scrutiny at the hands of the judges.

9.40 The Jonathan Ross Show. Jamaican singer, model and actress Grace Jones visits the studio, along with former Great British Bake Off winner Nadiya Hussain and comedian Micky Flanagan. Plus, music by Stormzy.

10.40 ITV News; Weather.

10.50 World Cup Qualifier Playoff Highlights. Jacqui Oatley presents action from all four first-leg matches, including Northern Ireland v Switzerland at Windsor Park and Denmark v Republic of Ireland at the Parken Stadium.

11.55 Film: Run Fat Boy Run. (2007) Romantic comedy, with Simon Pegg and Thandie Newton.

1.30 Jackpot247. **3.00** The Hungry Sailors. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.00 Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **6.25** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **6.50** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.15** Frasier. (R) **7.40** Frasier. (R) **8.05** Frasier. (R) **8.30** The Big Bang Theory. **8.55** The Big Bang Theory. **9.20** The Simpsons. (R) **9.50** The Simpsons. (R) **10.15** The Simpsons. (R) **10.45** The Simpsons. (R) **11.15** The Simpsons. (R) **11.45** Come Dine with Me. (R) **12.20** Come Dine with Me. (R) **12.50** Come Dine with Me. (R) **1.25** Come Dine with Me. (R) **1.55** Come Dine with Me. (R) **2.25** A Place in the Sun: Home or Away. (R) **3.30** A Place in the Sun. (R) **4.00** Best Laid Plans. **5.00** Grand Designs. (R)

6.00 Channel 4 News.

6.30 Volatile Earth: Killer Floods. Scientists use state-of-the-art technology to investigate theories that suggest catastrophic floods raged across the Earth thousands of years ago, shaping the planet's landmasses. Aerial photography is combined with the latest forensic techniques to assess bizarre landscapes in America, Iceland and the floor of the English Channel, which might all have been formed by huge floods. Previously seen on More4.

7.30 Formula 1: Brazilian Grand Prix Qualifying – Highlights. Steve Jones presents action from the battle for pole position in the 19th and penultimate round of the season, which takes place at Interlagos in Sao Paulo. Recently crowned world champion Lewis Hamilton won here for the first time last year, becoming the first British victor since Jenson Button in 2012.

9.00 Film: Terminator Genisys. (2015) Premiere. A soldier fighting in a post-apocalyptic war against living machines is sent back in time to prevent an attempt to change the past – but when he arrives, he finds that history has been changed beyond recognition – and that a plot is being hatched by an unexpected enemy to destroy the future of the human race. Sci-fi adventure sequel, starring Arnold Schwarzenegger and Emilia Clarke.

11.30 Film: GI Joe: Retaliation. (2013) An elite military team battles a terrorist organisation that has replaced the US president with an imposter. Action adventure sequel, with Dwayne Johnson.

1.40 The Last Leg. (R) **2.30** Hollyoaks.

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **10.00** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.35** Access. **10.40** The Gadget Show. (R) **11.40** Santa Makes You Laugh Out Loud. (R) **12.40 Film:** Operation Christmas. (2016) Drama, starring Tricia Helfer. **2.25 Film:** All I Want for Christmas. (2013) Festive fantasy, starring Melissa Sagemiller. **4.05 Film:** A Christmas Song. (2012) Romantic drama, with Natasha Henstridge and Gabe Hogan. **5.05** 5 News Update. **5.10 Film:** A Christmas Song. (2012) Concluded.

6.10 Film: The Nine Lives of Christmas. (2014) A fireman who prefers being single adopts a stray cat, but having a pet makes him long for some human company. Romantic comedy, starring Brandon Routh.

7.10 5 News Update.

7.15 Film: The Nine Lives of Christmas. (2014) Concluded.

7.50 NCIS: New Orleans. A petty officer is found dead in a sports arena clutching a tranquilliser gun, and the team discovers the killing is related to a kidnapping case from the past.

8.45 NCIS: New Orleans. A naval lieutenant is tortured and murdered, and the case takes a personal turn for Sebastian when he is kidnapped by the killer and forced to assist in a prison break.

9.40 5 News Weekend.

9.45 Live Boxing. Josh Taylor v Miguel Vazquez. Coverage of the WBC Silver Super-Lightweight title bout from Royal Highland Centre in Edinburgh. Taylor is undefeated in his professional career thus far, having recorded 10 consecutive victories that include nine wins by stoppage, but he faces arguably his toughest opponent in Vazquez. Though the Mexican may perhaps be on the slide in the tail end of his career he is vastly experienced, having previously held the IBF World Lightweight title from 2010 to 2014, while he boasts a record of 39 wins against just five losses.

11.30 Football on 5: Goal Rush. Colin Murray introduces all the goals from Leagues One and Two, including Doncaster Rovers v Rotherham United, Rochdale v Wigan Athletic, and Carlisle United v Yeovil Town.

12.05 SuperCasino. **3.10** When Calls the Heart. (R) **4.40** Access. **4.50** Great Artists. (R) **5.15** Wildlife SOS. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four

7.00 Natural World: Honey Badgers – Masters of Mayhem **8.00** The Mekong River with Sue Perkins **9.00** I Know Who You Are **11.35** The Vietnam War **12.30** Top of the Pops: 1984 **1.45** Natural World: Honey Badgers – Masters of Mayhem **2.45** The Mekong River with Sue Perkins **3.45** Close

ITV2

11.35 Film: See Spot Run (2001) **12.25** FYI Daily **12.30 Film:** See Spot Run (2001) **1.30 Film:** St Trinian's 2: The Legend of Fritton's Gold (2009) **2.30** FYI Daily **2.35 Film:** St Trinian's 2: The Legend of Fritton's Gold (2009) **3.40 Film:** Bean (1997) **4.40** FYI Daily **4.45 Film:** Bean (1997) **5.20 Film:** Clash of the Titans (2010) **6.20** FYI Daily **6.25 Film:** Clash of the Titans (2010) **7.25 Film:** Pacific Rim (2013) **8.25** FYI Daily **8.30 Film:** Pacific Rim (2013) **10.00** Celebrity Juice **10.50** Family Guy **12.45** American Dad! **1.35** Timewasters **2.05** Viral Tap **2.50** Teleshopping **5.50** ITV2 Nightscreen

ITV3

11.00 Film: Carry On Follow That Camel (1967) **11.50** Wycliffe **1.00** Foyle's War **5.05** Midsomer Murders **11.05** The Syndicate **12.10** Jane Eyre **2.15** ITV3 Nightscreen **2.30** Teleshopping

ITV4

11.20 Fishing Impossible **12.25** The Big Fish Off **1.30** ITV Racing: Live from Wincanton. Coverage of today's race meetings at Wincanton and Doncaster. **4.00** The Sweeney **5.00** The Car Chasers **6.00** Storage Wars **6.25** Football's Greatest: Johan Cruyff **6.45** Snooker: Champion of Champions Live. Coverage of the second semi-final from the Ricoh Arena in Coventry. **11.15 Film:** 6 Bullets (2012) **12.15** FYI Daily **12.20 Film:** 6 Bullets (2012) **1.30** The Classic Car Show **2.30** Football's Greatest: Bobby Charlton **2.45** ITV4 Nightscreen **3.00** Teleshopping

E4

11.00 The Goldbergs **1.25 Film:** Johnny English Reborn (2011) **3.30** The Big Bang Theory **9.00 Film:** The Bourne Legacy (2012) **11.40** Gogglebox **1.50** The Inbetweeners **2.50** Rude Tube **3.45** 2 Broke Girls **4.05** How I Met Your Mother

Film4

11.00 The Black Knight (1954) **1.00** Short Circuit 2 (1988) **3.10** Song of the Sea (2014) **5.05** Picture Perfect (1997) **7.05** Night at the Museum: Secret of the Tomb (2014) **9.00** The World's End (2013) **11.10** 30 Days of Night (2007) **1.25** The Anomaly (2014) **3.25** Close

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SUNDAY'S TV NOVEMBER 12

CHOICE

Elton John

Elton John: The Nation's Favourite Song (ITV, 9pm)
For a fan of the piano man, choosing your favourite song from his back catalogue is like being asked to pick your favourite child. Where does one even begin with such a task? How do you devise a shortlist, discarding potential classics along the way? Whatever the answer, ITV has attempted to make us do just that, and now it's revealing the results of a nationwide poll to unearth the 20 most popular of Elton's tunes. But what will make it to the top of the list? Candle in the Wind is perhaps his most famous work, particularly because it was revamped by him and lyricist Bernie Taupin following Princess Diana's death, but there are plenty to more to go at.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.20** Remembrance Sunday: The Cenotaph. **12.30** Women at War: 100 Years of Service. **1.30** BBC News; Weather. **1.45** Flog It! (R) **2.05 Film:** War Horse. (2011) First World War drama, starring Jeremy Irvine. **4.20** Songs of Praise. **4.55** Blue Planet II. (R) **5.55** BBC News.

6.10 Regional Programme.

6.20 Countryfile. A special episode for Remembrance Sunday, in which Ellie Harrison discovers how a rural environment can be therapeutic for servicemen and women returning from conflict. She also investigates the vital role played by female canal workers during the Second World War, where Adam Henson visits a school that is teaching farming skills to transform students' lives.

7.20 Strictly Come Dancing – The Results. Tess Daly and Claudia Winkleman reveal the results of last night's viewers' votes, and another couple leaves the contest.

8.00 Blue Planet II. Creatures that live on coral reefs, including groupers, small predators that scientists believe are as intelligent as chimpanzees. These creatures have a remarkable aptitude for communication to the point where they can interact with other species including octopi and work together to catch prey. Plus, footage of a vast spawning event involving several different species of fish, coral and invertebrates, and time-lapse photography of coral polyps growing and dying, creating a structure visible from space.

9.00 Howards End. New series. Period drama based on EM Forster's novel about the lives of three English families at the beginning of the 20th century.

10.00 BBC News.

10.20 Regional Programme.

10.30 Alan Shearer: Dementia, Football And Me. The former England international looks into the potential link between football and dementia, examining some of the latest scientific evidence from British researchers.

11.30 The Women's Football Show. A look at the biggest issues in the women's game.

12.05 Ronny Chieng: International Student. **12.35** Weather for the Week Ahead. **12.40** BBC News.

BBC2

6.05 Coast. (R) **6.50** A to Z of TV Gardening. (R) **7.35** Great British Garden Revival. (R) **8.35** Countryfile. (R) **9.30** Live Rugby League World Cup. **1.00** International Rugby Union. (R) **2.00** Live Tennis: ATP World Tour Finals. Coverage of the afternoon session on day one from The O2 in London. **4.30** Cycling: Track Cycling World Cup. Live coverage of the third and final day from Manchester.

6.00 Remembrance Sunday: The Cenotaph. David Dimbleby presents highlights of the service from Whitehall, attended by the Prince of Wales.

7.00 Big Life Fix: Children in Need Special. One-off special in which Simon Reeve is joined by leading engineers and designers to invent life-changing solutions for three children with severe disabilities. Eight-year-old Josh was born completely blind, a condition that prevents him playing in with his classmates at break time. Eight-year-old Ayala, who has cerebral palsy, would love to play with her twin sister on an equal footing, and 10-year-old Aman struggles with poor memory after suffering brain damage in a car accident. Can the experts help her and the other children improve their lives? (R)

8.00 Robot Wars. An experienced contestant returns to defend his legacy in the fourth heat, battling alongside five other contenders through a series of group battles and knock-out rounds.

9.00 Louis Theroux: Transgender Kids. Louis travels to San Francisco, where he spends time with children who are undergoing gender-reassignment treatment at UCSF Hospital's Child and Adolescent Gender Centre. (R)

10.00 Snowfall. Teddy is given once last chance to put things right, Franklin's uncle introduces him to a potential mentor, and Oso and Lucia go in search of a new business partner.

10.45 Mock the Week. Ed Gamble, Milton Jones, Miles Jupp, Nish Kumar and Felicity Ward join host Dara O Briain and regular Hugh Dennis for the topical comedy show. (R)

11.15 Rugby League World Cup. Action from the day's final group-stage games.

12.15 Film: The Human Factor. (1979) **2.10** Sign Zone: Question Time. (R) **3.10** Holby City. (R) **4.10** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Sooty. **6.10** The Aquabats! Super Show! (R) **6.35** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **6.45** Super 4. (R) **7.00** Mission Employable. (R) **7.05** Oddbods. (R) **7.10** Thunderbirds Are Go. (R) **7.30** Scrambled!: Scrambled! **7.35** Scrambled!: The Tom and Jerry Show. (R) **7.50** Scrambled!: Ben 10. (R) **8.10** Scrambled!: Mr Bean: The Animated Series. (R) **8.30** Scrambled!: Make It Pop. (R) **9.00** Scrambled!: Wishfart. (R) **9.25** ITV News. **9.30 Film:** Columbo: Butterfly in Shades of Grey. (1993) **11.25** Tipping Point. (R) **12.25** ITV News; Weather. **12.35** The X Factor Live. (R) **1.55** Midsomer Murders. (R) **4.00** Prince Harry and Meghan: Truly, Madly, Deeply. (R) **5.00** Sheridan. (R)

6.00 Regional Programme; Weather.

6.10 ITV News; Weather.

6.30 The Chase: Celebrity Special. Martin Roberts, Tracy Edwards, Debbie McGee and Duncan James answer general knowledge questions and work as a team to secure a cash prize for charity. Presented by Bradley Walsh.

7.30 The X Factor Live. The third weekend of live shows concludes, with the remaining acts competing to impress the judges and audience and maintain their place in the show. The most popular act of the weekend will win a special prize that money cannot buy. Presented by Dermot O'Leary.

9.00 Elton John: The Nation's Favourite Song. A countdown of the singer's 20 most popular songs, chosen by ITV viewers to celebrate his 70th birthday. Elton discusses the stories behind the tracks in a candid conversation with David Walliams, while celebrity fans and friends reveal what their favourite numbers mean to them. With contributions from Ed Sheeran, Annie Lennox, Stephen Fry and Elton's longtime songwriting partner Bernie Taupin.

10.30 ITV News; Weather.

10.45 Unbelievable Moments Caught on Camera. Alastair Stewart presents a second selection of extraordinary footage. (R)

11.45 Play to the Whistle. Holly Willoughby hosts the sports-based comedy panel show, in which two teams go head to head in quizzes and physical games. (R)

12.20 Jackpot247. **3.00** Motorsport UK. **3.50** ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.00 Kevin Can Wait. **6.25** Kevin Can Wait. **6.50** Kevin Can Wait. **7.15** Frasier. (R) **7.40** Frasier. (R) **8.05** The Simpsons. (R) **8.30** The Simpsons. (R) **9.00** The Simpsons. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** Simpsons Day. (R) **12.55** Simpsons Day. (R) **1.25** Simpsons Day. (R) **1.55** Simpsons Day. (R) **2.20** Simpsons Day. (R) **2.50** Simpsons Day. (R) **3.20** Simpsons Day. (R) **3.50** Simpsons Day. (R) **4.15** Simpsons Day. (R) **4.45 Film:** Men in Black. (1997) Sci-fi comedy, starring Will Smith and Tommy Lee Jones.

6.30 Channel 4 News.

7.00 Britain's Forgotten Army. Documentary about the thousands of Chinese workers who supported Allied forces in the First World War by digging trenches, maintaining vehicles and dismantling unexploded bombs, but whose vital work went largely unrecognised. The programme uses recently discovered letters, diaries and documents to explore the experiences of this workforce, and features contributions from their living descendants.

8.00 The Queen's Favourite Animals. Documentary about the queen's love of animals, from the corgis that have been her lifelong companions to thoroughbred racehorses. The programme features contributions from childhood friends and jockeys who rode her horses to victory, and examines how the queen gained a respected reputation as a champion breeder of not just dogs and horses, but highland cattle.

9.00 Big Ben: Saving the World's Most Famous Clock. Documentary about restoration work on the iconic clock tower, which will see the bells silenced for the next four years. Anna Keay, Director of Landmark Trust, goes behind the scenes on this massive project, and talks to Parliament's principal architect and the three clockmakers who have the challenging task of taking the gigantic mechanism apart for the first time in nearly 160 years.

10.30 Formula 1: Brazilian Grand Prix Highlights. Steve Jones presents action from the 19th and penultimate round of the season, which took place at Interlagos in Sao Paulo.

12.45 Film: Life on the Limit. (2013) **2.45** The Supervet. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Little Princess. **6.10** Wanda and the Alien. (R) **6.20** Poppy Cat. (R) **6.35** Wissper. (R) **6.40** Milkshake! Monkey. (R) **6.45** Milkshake! Bopping About. (R) **6.50** Simon. (R) **7.00** Peppa Pig. (R) **7.05** Paw Patrol. (R) **7.15** Bob the Builder. (R) **7.25** Fireman Sam. (R) **7.40** Olly the Little White Van. (R) **7.50** Blaze and the Monster Machines. (R) **8.15** Paw Patrol. (R) **8.35** Nella the Princess Knight. (R) **8.50** Noddy: Toyland Detective. (R) **9.00** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.15** Shimmer and Shine. (R) **9.30** Digby Dragon. (R) **9.45** Peppa Pig. (R) **9.55** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. (R) **10.30** Football on 5: Goal Rush. (R) **11.00** 5 News Special: Remembrance Sunday. **11.05 Film:** Let It Snow. (2013) **12.50 Film:** On Strike for Christmas. (2010) Drama, starring Daphne Zuniga. **2.30 Film:** Just in Time for Christmas. (2015) Premiere. Romantic comedy, starring Eloise Mumford and Michael Stahl-David. **4.20 Film:** Northpole. (2014) Premiere. Christmas fantasy, starring Tiffani Thiessen. **5.25** 5 News Update. **5.30 Film:** Northpole. (2014) Concluded.

6.10 Film: Deck the Halls. (2006) Two neighbours feud over who has the best Christmas lights and end up resorting to desperate measures to outdo each other. Comedy, starring Danny DeVito.

7.10 5 News Update.

7.15 Film: Deck the Halls. (2006) Concluded.

8.00 Rugby on 5: Anglo Welsh Cup Highlights. Action from the matchday two pool fixtures, which included Ospreys v Wasps, Northampton Saints v Dragons and Scarlets v Exeter Chiefs.

8.55 5 News Weekend.

9.00 MTV EMA 2017: London. Live coverage of the 24th MTV European Music Awards from Wembley Arena. Rita Ora hosts the show, which features performances by Stormzy, Kesha, the Killers, Demi Lovato, Shawn Mendes, Liam Payne, Travis Scott and Luis Fonsi. Nominees include Taylor Swift, Ed Sheeran, Foo Fighters and Rag 'n' Bone Man, while Natalie Dormer, Madison Beer and Sabrina Carpenter are among the stars presenting awards.

10.55 Before They Were Stars. (R)

12.50 Lip Sync Battle UK: Carol Vorderman v Martin Kemp. (R) **1.15** SuperCasino. **3.10 Film:** Another Cinderella Story. (2008) **4.40** Access. **4.55** Great Artists. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Four

7.00 Only Connect **7.30** University Challenge **8.00** Hedd Wyn: The Lost War Poet **9.00** Shark **10.00** The Sky at Night **10.30** Horizon: Strange Signals from Outer Space! **11.30** I Was There: The Great War Interviews **12.30** War of Words: Soldier-Poets of the Somme **2.00** Balletboyz – Young Men **3.00** Shark **4.00** Close

ITV2

11.00 The X Factor Live **12.20** Take Me Out **1.35** You've Been Framed! Gold **2.10 Film:** Looney Tunes: Back in Action (2003) **3.05** FYI Daily **3.10 Film:** Looney Tunes: Back in Action (2003) **3.50 Film:** Happy Feet Two (2011) **4.50** FYI Daily **4.55 Film:** Happy Feet Two (2011) **5.50 Film:** Jack the Giant Slayer (2013) **6.50** FYI Daily **6.55 Film:** Jack the Giant Slayer (2013) **8.00 Film:** Quantum of Solace (2008) **9.00** FYI Daily **9.05 Film:** Quantum of Solace (2008) **10.15** Family Guy **11.40** American Dad! **12.40 Film:** The Nutty Professor (1996) **1.40** FYI Daily **1.50 Film:** The Nutty Professor (1996) **2.30** Teleshopping

ITV3

12.50 Heidi **2.55 Film:** Columbo: The Conspirators (1978) **5.00** Agatha Christie's Marple **7.00** Midsomer Murders **9.00** The Syndicate **10.10** Honest **11.10 Film:** Chicago (2002) **12.20** FYI Daily **12.25 Film:** Chicago (2002) **1.25** The Knock **2.20** Mr Selfridge **3.10** Agatha Christie's Marple **4.45** Judge Judy **5.45** ITV3 Nightscreen

ITV4

11.45 Storage Wars **12.45** Snooker: Champion of Champions Live. The opening session of the final at the Ricoh Arena, Coventry. **5.15** The Car Chasers **5.40** The Sweeney **6.45** Snooker: Champion of Champions Live. The second session of the final at the Ricoh Arena, Coventry. **11.15 Film:** Gascoigne (2015) **12.30** FYI Daily **12.35 Film:** Gascoigne (2015)

E4

11.00 Made in Chelsea **12.00** Don't Tell the Bride **1.00** The Goldbergs **3.30** The Big Bang Theory: Super Hero Day **8.30** The Big Bang Theory **9.00 Film:** The Inbetweeners Movie (2011) **11.00** The Inbetweeners **12.05** Gogglebox

Film4

11.00 Holiday Inn (1941) **1.00** Dragonball Evolution (2009) **2.40** Carry On Regardless (1961) **4.30** Hugo (2011) **6.55** Tomorrow, When the War Began (2010) **9.00** The Hunger Games: Catching Fire (2013) **11.45** Priest (2011) **1.30** Storage 24 (2012) **3.20** Close

PICK OF THE WEEK

FILM CHOICES

MONDAY
Kickboxer, Channel 5, 11.05pm
A martial arts student witnesses his brother being brutally defeated in the ring by a Thai champion in a fight that leaves him paralysed. Vowing revenge, he seeks out the help of a reclusive master, under whose tutelage he hones his skills until he is ready to confront his enemy. Action thriller, starring Jean-Claude Van Damme, Dennis Alexio and Haskell V Anderson. (1989)

TUESDAY
Naughty or Nice, Channel 5, 3.10pm
A woman is accidentally given a magic book used by Santa Claus to find out which children have been bad and good. She uses its power to expose the wicked deeds of those around her, but ends up learning more than she would like, getting into conflict with her neighbours and uncovering her boyfriend's secrets. Festive fantasy, starring Hilarie Burton and Matt Dallas. (2012)

Kickboxer, Monday, Channel 5, 11.05pm

WEDNESDAY
Christmas Confessions, Channel 5, 3.15pm
A struggling actress who moved to New York to pursue her dreams returns to the small town she escaped years before for the festive season, where a romance with an old acquaintance shows her that the life she left behind may be better than Broadway. Romance, starring Sarah Lancaster. (2015)

THURSDAY
Angels and Ornaments, Channel 5, 3.15pm
A model of a carol singer hanging from a lovelorn musician's Christmas tree comes to life in the build-up to the festive season. The living ornament decides to help his owner put a recent break-up behind her by matchmaking her with a childhood friend. Romantic fantasy, starring Jessalyn Gilsig. (2014)

FRIDAY
The Chronicles of Riddick, ITV, 10.40pm
Fugitive Riddick evades capture by bounty hunters and steals their spacecraft, only to run into an even bigger threat – fanatical cult members on a sinister mission to kill or convert anyone who crosses their path. Sci-fi adventure sequel, with Vin Diesel. (2004)

Legitimate Tommy struggles to leave the past behind

Whether it being buried alive by a wartime tunnel collapse or beaten to within a inch of his life by Father Hughes' hired muscle, Tommy Shelby has found himself in plenty of tight spots.

However, the Birmingham crime boss might just have bitten off more than he can chew as Steven Knight's acclaimed saga Peaky Blinders returns for a fourth series.

Cillian Murphy, who plays Tommy, said of the new action-packed run: "In the classic gangster arc, the last season was sort of all about the wealth, the house and all that material stuff. This season is sort of a return to the roots."

At the end of the last series, set in 1924, we saw Tommy at what Knight has called the character's "most nihilistic."

Having ascended into high society from his humble beginnings in Small Heath, Tommy seemingly threw his own family under the proverbial bus of the law for the criminal acts he made in the effort to save his captured young son.

Every Shelby except Tommy was arrested at the leader's luxurious countryside manor after they defied the Russians in a jewel heist and blew up a train.

Whether or not they have all wriggled out of the charges will become clear, as the new series begins in December 1925.

Thomas Shelby OBE has now acquired unprecedented legitimacy – but the gangster is a lonely man, estranged from his family and focused on business.

However, when he receives a mysterious letter on Christmas Eve, he realises that his loved-ones and his empire are in danger of annihilation.

As the enemy closes in, Tommy flees his country house and returns to the only safe place he knows: Small Heath, the slum where he grew up.

Facing a more determined and sophisticated threat than ever before, the Shelbys must put differences aside, take up arms and fight for survival.

So far, we know little of this new danger other than it is a new criminal organisation "of a different dimension," headed by a ruthless crime boss (Adrien Brody), and according to Knight, it will represent the Shelbys' "biggest threat" in the saga to date.

Knight is thrilled to have Oscar-winner Brody on board as the story develops. He says: "Adrien genuinely was the actor in my head when I wrote the part. I'm sure he will be a formidable presence."

Other new cast members this time around include Aidan Gillen (Game of Thrones) and Charlie Murphy (Happy Valley), who will be joining the likes of Murphy, Helen McCrory, Tom Hardy and Charlotte Riley.

Knight adds: "We have a dream team gathered for series four, coming to us for love of the show, which is great.

"Adrien Brody, Aidan Gillen and Charlie Murphy give us a wealth of talent to work with, and with Tom Hardy and Charlotte Riley returning we couldn't have hoped for more."

Cillian Murphy stars in Peaky Blinders, Wednesday, BBC2, 9pm

BEST OF THE REST

MONDAY
Children in Need Rocks the 80s
BBC1, 8.30pm
The first Children in Need telethon was broadcast in 1980 – and now the charity is going back to that decade with a star-studded concert at the SSE Arena, Wembley. Fearne Cotton and Sara Cox introduce performances by acts including A-ha, Bananarama, Boy George, Erasure, Europe, Imagination featuring Leee John, Jason Donovan, Mica Paris, Nick Heyward, OMD and UB40 featuring Ali, Astro and Mickey. And for the younger viewers, there's X Factor winner Louisa Johnson, who will be getting into the Eighties spirit even though she wasn't born until 1998. As well as hearing some much-loved tunes, we'll also be getting all the backstage gossip from Roman Kemp – and a few reminders of how Children in Need has been changing young people's lives for 37 years.

TUESDAY
Live International Football
ITV, 7.30pm
England v Brazil (Kick-off 8.00pm). Mark Pougatch presents coverage of the friendly encounter, which takes place at Wembley Stadium, as Gareth Southgate's men continue their preparations for next summer's World Cup in Russia. These sides last met back in June 2013 when an entertaining match – the first to be held at the renovated Maracana in Rio de Janeiro – finished 2-2. The teams had also played each other earlier on that year at Wembley, when goals from Wayne Rooney and Frank Lampard gave the Three Lions their first victory over Brazil since March 1990. With analysis from Lee Dixon, Ryan Giggs and Ian Wright, and commentary by Clive Tyldesley and Glenn Hoddle.

WEDNESDAY
DIY SOS: The Million Pound Build for Children in Need
BBC1, 8pm
The DIY SOS team descend on Swansea to tackle one of their biggest challenges to date, as they build a centre and supported housing for young people in care and leaving care. This special programme also shares the stories from some of Wales' most vulnerable young people as well as the founder of the Roots Foundation Wales, a charity that supports young people in and leaving care. The team, with the help of hundreds of volunteers, build a bespoke new centre and transitional flats from the ground up for Roots, a charity, part-funded by BBC Children in Need despite storms and a tight 11-day build schedule.

Children in Need 2017, Friday, BBC1, 7.30pm

THURSDAY
Love, Lies and Records
BBC1, 9pm
Births, deaths and marriages – it's all in a day's work for registrars. So, no wonder Kay Mellor, the writer who brought us Fat Friends and In the Club, thought a register office would make the perfect setting for a six-part drama series. Ashley Jensen leads the cast as Kate Dickenson, who is anxious about her colleagues' reaction to the news that she's about to be promoted to Superintendent – although she doesn't anticipate her fellow registrar James making a big announcement of his own or a disgruntled co-worker threatening to expose a dark secret from her past. Just to add to the pressure, Kate is dealing with problems at home, not to mention her concerns about an upcoming wedding where the bride and groom don't appear to speak the same language.

FRIDAY
Children in Need 2017
BBC1, 7.30pm
It's that time of the year again when the nation's celebrities urge us to dig deep for a good cause. This year's fundraising extravaganza is hosted by Tess Daly, Graham Norton, Mel Giedroyc, Ade Adepitan, Rochelle and Marvin Humes, and there are plenty of other stars pitching in as well. The highlights include former and current Blue Peter presenters taking part in a special edition of Strictly Come Dancing, while judge Craig Revel Horwood also crops up as Miss Hannigan with the West End cast of Annie. However, even Miss Hannigan will struggle to compete with the evening's other Queen of Mean, Anne Robinson, who returns to host a star-studded round of The Weakest Link. There's also a musical interlude courtesy of the EastEnders, while the Countryfile team swap their wellies for cowboy boots.

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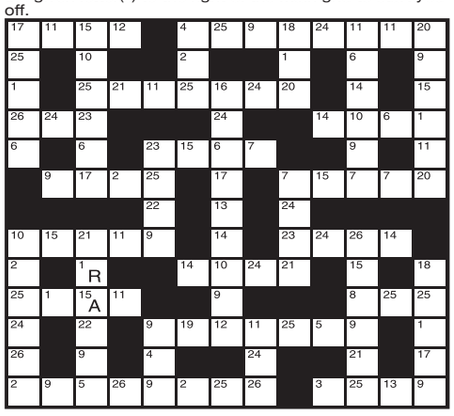
BRAIN GYM

No.455

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



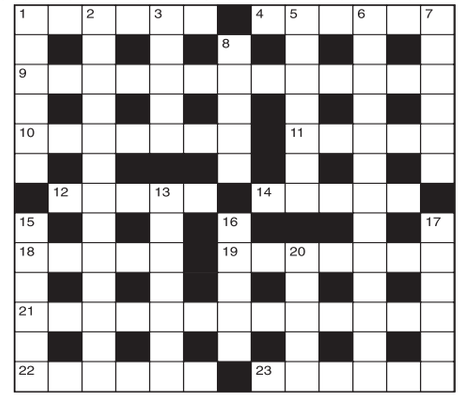
1 R	14
2	15 A
3	16
4	17
5	18
6	19
7	20
8	21
9	22
10	23
11	24
12	25
13	26

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
O	R	Q	G	L	X	D	T	E	F	Z	W	U
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
I	P	J	C	S	H	M	Y	B	A	V	N	K

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.



Cryptic Clues:

Across

1. Woollen material for a head-dress the French sent back (6)
4. They are used for securing a body of sailors in the ship (6)
9. Properly managed, like a successful orchestra (4-9)
10. Regarding a kind of glass (7)
11. It's routine for the sailor to be included in strike (5)
12. See 2 Down.
14. A prison in a state of agitation (5)
18. One in dole confusion reduced the friction (5)
19. Water container for one who puts up a tent (7)
21. Country clothes? (8,5)
22. Skewers, we hear, for pieces of meat (6)
23. Criticises what may be used for house cover (6)

Down

1. In addition, a toff! (2,4)
2. & 12Ac. Use every device when playing the organ! (4,3,3,3,5)
3. Plants displaying a bit of xerophytic activity (5)
5. Puts in a form of words - they are used for lying (7)
6. Number of staff allowed for the household (13)
7. Awkwardly seated but staidly composed (6)
8. At home, I leave Jones, the architect (5)
13. Grazing land providing something soft near the harbour (7)
15. Spikes will cause a broken piston (6)
16. Use a rose for a cluster of flowers (5)
17. Decisive events will produce an increase in the Civil Service (6)
20. Currently variable (5)

Quick Clues:

Across

1. Cotton cloth (6)
4. Impede (6)
9. Holding irrational beliefs (13)
10. Friendly (7)
11. Christmas hymn (5)
12. Adhere (5)
14. Stanza (5)
18. Plunder (5)
19. Answered (7)
21. Unsuitable (13)
22. Stretch (6)
23. Abandon (6)

Down

1. Careless (6)
2. Actually (2,5,2,4)
3. Pulsate (5)
5. Object (7)
6. Defer action (13)
7. Outcome (6)
8. Scatter (5)
13. Make less expensive (7)
15. Achieve success (6)
16. Earlier (5)
17. Coming (6)
20. Cleanse (5)

Sudoku

				3	6	8		
4		6						7
1		8		7		9	6	
	9				7			
8			6	5	9			2
		5	8				1	
	6			9		3		5
2		3			5			4
		4		6		1		

Fill in the grid above so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

6	1	2	8	9	4	3	5	7
5	8	7	1	2	3	6	4	9
9	3	4	5	7	6	2	8	1
4	5	3	2	8	1	9	7	6
1	2	8	7	6	9	4	3	5
7	9	6	4	3	5	1	2	8
8	7	1	6	4	2	5	9	3
2	6	9	3	5	7	8	1	4
3	4	5	9	1	8	7	6	2

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Out of service; 7 Sided; 8 Incur; 9 Use; 10 Chameleon; 11 Petard; 12 Gemini; 15 Hard lines; 17 Lac; 18 Amuse; 19 Ivory; 21 Person of note. Down: 1 One jump ahead; 2 Fed; 3 Endear; 4 Voiceless; 5 Cache; 6 Frankincense; 7 Sheet; 10 Carollers; 13 Inlay; 14 Ensign; 16 Rouse; 20 Off.
QUICK - Across: 1 Straight away; 7 Swell; 8 Preen; 9 Tie; 10 Propagate; 11 Option; 12 Limpid; 15 Inspiring; 17 Arc; 18 Globe; 19 Haven; 21 Protestation.
Down: 1 Shortcomings; 2 Ire; 3 Hollow; 4 Appealing; 5 Arena; 6 Interdiction; 7 Sweet; 10 Prominent; 13 Plain; 14 Sights; 16 Spoor; 20 Via.

Quiz

1. On which island is Tokyo?
2. Which South American revolutionary was known as The Liberator?
3. Who formed the Free French in the UK in WW2?
4. Which Gothic horror story is subtitled The Modern Prometheus?
5. Which OT prophet was carried to heaven in a fiery chariot?
6. For which fish is Canada's Fraser River famous?
7. With which football team did multi-millionaire Sir Jack Hayward enjoy a long association?
8. In Scandinavian mythology, who were the three goddesses of fate?
9. In which country is the yuan the standard monetary unit?
10. Which peninsula contains much of Denmark?

Last week's solutions:

Quiz: 1 Mole; 2 Sir Henry Morgan; 3 Russia; 4 Methodism; 5 Achilles; 6 Hamilton; 7 Dog; 8 Basketball; 9 The Loch Ness Monster; 10 Selective breeding.

Niner: SYNCOPATE

Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

53169 gives a family member,
423 gives a second family member,
7538 gives a third family member.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

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I could barely believe my eyes!

WE peered out through the window of the hide and waited. This was the heart of brown bear territory in eastern Finland, close to the Russian border.

Our extended weekend break had taken us to Europe's last great wilderness to re-connect with nature. We didn't have to wait long. Within minutes, a dark lumbering figure emerged from the forest of ancient pines into the marshland before us, sniffing the peaty earth and glancing cautiously around.

Within moments a second bear lolloped onto the scene, followed by a third. "Bears are very shy creatures," said our host Kari, who runs the nearby Boreal Wildlife Centre where we were to stay the night. "They spend their time deep in the forest away from humans. It would be very rare to experience one while hiking. You have to come to the hide."

ODOUR

Reassuring news for someone who was planning a six-mile forest hike the following day.

The hides are fitted with very tall flues to expel the odour of humans high above the bears' nostrils. The furious clicking of cameras from my fellow wildlife watchers didn't seem to faze this trio, and our excitement was palpable as they moved closer to the hide and began snuffling around in the muddy gloop just a few metres away.

We were close enough to smell their strong musky odour, see their battle scars and massive paws. The biggest of the bears glanced up, seemingly meeting my gaze. I felt like I had met royalty. Forest royalty. Back at base camp on the edge of Lake Viiksimo, we tucked into a hearty salmon stew and chatted to a couple of renowned wildlife photographers who regularly visit Boreal Wildlife Centre for shoots. Wild Taiga, the region where we were staying, is not just home to brown bears. Wolves, wolverine, elk, wild reindeer, golden eagles and capercaillie all roam this vast wilderness. Kari regaled us with tales of the forest until late into the evening.

Early autumn is a great time to see wild bears

The privately-owned lakeside Kalevala Hotel

It's not hard to see why Lonely Planet places Finland as the third best travel destination in the world. It is the world's cleanest and greenest country, according the Environmental Performance Index. Its air is among the purest on the planet and the water so clean you can drink straight from most of its lakes. It has a population of barely six million, yet covers an area larger than France. It is 70 per cent forest. Nature-loving Finns have learned to live off the land and this is reflected in their culture. The right to roam – known as Everyman's Right – is set in law and means you can walk, ski, cycle or ride freely in all natural areas, even if they are privately owned.

We had arrived in Finland the day before our bear adventure. The connecting flight from Helsinki to Kajaani in the Kainuu region was by prop aircraft, a clue we were travelling somewhere remote. As I stepped off the plane, the pure, clear night air filled my lungs – and a far cry from the polluted haze I had left behind in London just a few hours ago. Our taxi flashed past countless shimmering black lakes and the dark silhouette of limitless pine forests. It was midnight when we arrived at our first port of call, the lakeside Kalevala Hotel in Kuhmo.

Pulling back the curtains the next day, was the first of many breathtaking moments of our four-day trip. The view was spectacular. A vast lake sparkled in the early morning sun, surrounded by ancient pines as far as the eye could see. A treat not to be missed. KIM BENNETT

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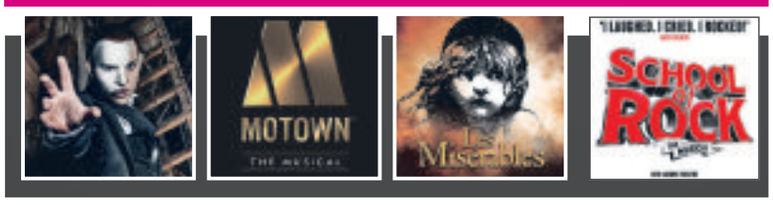

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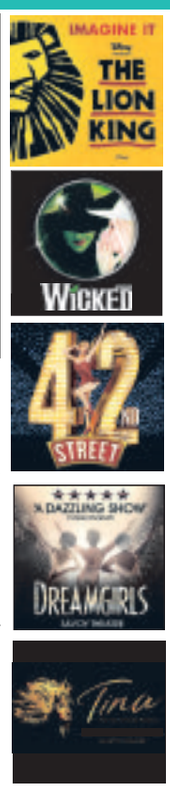

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PROPERTY

YOUR WEEKLY GUIDE TO HOME BUYING AND LETTING

Spacious three-bed apartment is near to centre of city

In a simply beautiful location, this three-bedroomed apartment for sale in Calthorpe Mansions, Edgbaston, Birmingham, is very close to the hotspot of Birmingham City Centre, with its restaurants, designer shops and theatres.

Having excellent living space and communal garden views, it is for sale through loveyourpostcode.com at £239,950.

It is positioned in Edgbaston just off Islington Row Middleway.

There is stair or lift access to all apartments. This apartment is located on the second floor. It has an entrance hallway and the main reception room is an elegant and well decorated space.

It features laminate flooring with a neutral colour scheme and is a homely environment. It has a stunning view of the communal gardens from bay windows.

The double master bedroom is positioned left of the entrance hall. It also features another great view of the gardens and surrounding apartments from the bay windows. The final two bedrooms are both fully carpeted and have space for either single or double beds, each room has neutral décor and the potential to be turned into an office or second living room if desired.

The bathroom has a bath with mosaic wall tiling, a sink and a shower cubicle with a separate WC. The last room on offer is the kitchen and diner area. This is open plan. On one side the kitchen area has work surfaces with storage units and fitted appliances, and to the other side is a spacious dining and breakfast area.

Located only a couple of minutes drive from Five Ways Island, this property benefits from excellent access into the heart of England's second city. There are excellent bus routes on your doorstep as well as Five Ways train station within walking distance.

loveyourpostcode.com has been selling/renting/managing property for 10 years. A spokesman said: "We are proud to be Birmingham's highest performing estate agent in respect of marketing exposure, time on market and final price. Try our modern approach to property at loveyourpostcode.com and save thousands."

EDGBASTON £239,950

TO VIEW THIS PROPERTY

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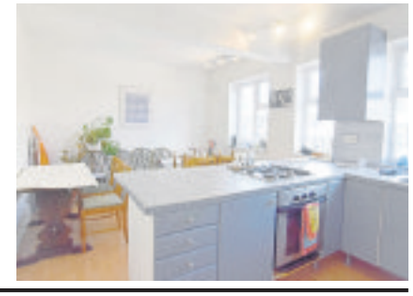
KEY FEATURES

- Stylish apartment
- Beautiful location
- 3 bedrooms
- Excellent living space
- Close to city centre



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Traditional three-bed semi in a desirable location

A traditional three-bedroomed semi detached property in one of Oldbury's most sought-after and desirable locations, 121 Victoria Road, Oldbury, lies opposite West Smethwick Park.

Having excellent family accommodation, having been extended to the rear, it is for sale through Tom Giles at £235,000.

There are good public transport links, including Junctions 1 & 2 of the M5 motorway for commuters. With double glazing and gas

OLDBURY £235,000

central heating, the home has fitted wardrobes to all bedrooms and a large private established rear garden. There is a sitting room with a bay window, wooden flooring and a wall mounted gas fire. The lounge has a chimney breast with a niche, display plinth and gas fire with wooden flooring. Double doors lead to the kitchen and double glazed French doors open to the rear garden.

A cloakroom/WC has a shower cubicle with near full height tiling, small wash hand basin with tiled splash and low flush WC.

Upstairs, bedroom has a bay window and two built-in double wardrobes. Bedroom two has two built-in double wardrobes. Bedroom three has a built-in store cupboard. The bathroom has a white suite. Contact Tom Giles on 0121 552 6171.

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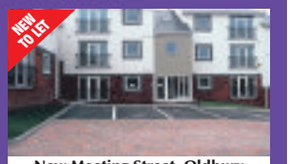

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PROPERTY

Perfect for first time buyers, on sale with no chain

An ideal first time buy, 11 Spring Meadow, Tipton, lies on a popular estate and has well-presented accommodation. It is for sale though Skitts at £127,500 with no chain.

This attractive, modern property has gas central heating and double glazing throughout. Its accommodation briefly comprises a lounge, conservatory, kitchen, two bedrooms, a bathroom, off-road parking and a rear garden.

In more detail the off-road parking is to the front. A door opens into the entrance hall which has stairs off to the first floor. The kitchen has a window to the front, a range of wall and base units with roll top work surfaces, a sink with a drainer and a mixer tap and oven. The lounge has sliding doors into the conservatory. This in turn has French doors opening out to the rear garden.

TIPTON
£127,500

Off the first floor landing, bedroom one has a window overlooking the rear and features built-in wardrobes. Bedroom two has views over the property's frontage and features a storage cupboard.

The bathroom has a suite which includes a bath with a shower over, wash hand basin, low level WC and a heated towel rail. Outside, the rear garden has a decking area with a step to a grass lawn.

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bookanad.expressandstar.co.uk

To advertise your business and reach more than 61,597 potential customers...

1. Call us on... **01902 319590**
2. E-mail us at... **mark.moore@expressandstar.co.uk**
3. Post to... **Mark Moore, Sandwell Chronicle, Black Country House, Rounds Green Road, Oldbury B69 2DG**

ClassifiedAds
BUY LOCAL, SELL LOCAL

Brought to you by **Express & Star**

Classified Ads

Buy Local, **Sell** Local

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FreeAds

IT'S FREE IT'S EASY

For items up to **£250**

VISIT:
bookanad.expressandstar.co.uk

Simply press the free ad icon.
Sorry, no pets, guns or livestock.
Private advertisers only.

Place a paid for advert

By Phone 01902 317878
8.30am - 5.30pm Mon - Fri.
Closed Sat/Sun and Bank Holidays

Online
bookanad.expressandstar.co.uk

In person
At your local Express & Star Office.
Cancel/amend, call before 3.00pm Monday - Friday for the next day's advertisement or also before 3.00pm Friday for Monday's advertisement.

Funeral Directors

Turn To Us For Help and Support

In your time of need we'll take care of all the funeral arrangements.

- Est. 1907
- 24 hour service

G. Gibbs
Funeral Directors
44 All Saints Way
West Bromwich B71 1PZ
0121 553 0442
Dignity
Part of Dignity plc. A British Company.

1 Family

Elderly & Disabled

ELITE MOBILITY SCOOTER Fully charged battery, ready for use, only used twice, wasn't suitable, free scooter bag, all instructions, cost £800 new **£495.** **01922 442465.**

RED ROYAL 4 DISABILITY four wheel scooter, road/path, only 13 miles from new, immaculate condition, cost £2,995 sell for **£1,400 ono.** **Genuine reason for sale. 0121 5571256.**

2 Leisure Time

Car Boot Sales

COMMUNITY INDOOR CAR BOOT SALE
Saturday, November 11.
12 noon - 2pm.
ST. MARKS CHURCH HALL
Thimblemill Road
Smethwick
B67 6LP.

INDOOR TABLE TOP CARBOOT SALE
Saturday, November 11.
7.30am -2pm.
New Life Apostolic Church
4 St. James Street,
Wednesbury, WS10 7DY.
07860 883092.

Caravans/ Motorhomes

3 BEDROOM STATIC caravan for sale. 12 month season. Seaside location. Great facilities. Pet friendly. wifi. £14,995. Call Paul for information: 07960 944721.

We Want Your Motorhome
Finance Cleared
Fast Secure Payment
Top Prices Paid
Please Call AEG on 01384 848439 or Lee Jinks on 07740 895448
www.aegmotorhomes.co.uk

holidays

Travel Abroad

READERS ARE REMINDED to check with any Advertisers that their holiday costs are fully covered by a recognised bonding or insurance scheme.

mind, body & soul

Massage

MOBILE Aromatherapy Massage Therapist Home / Hotel. To book appointments call 07437 569187.

what's on

Christmas Events

CHRISTMAS FAYRE
Saturday, November 11.
at 12 noon.
St. Peter's Church Hall, Whitehall Road, West Bromwich.
Admission 20p.

3 Home & Services

Furniture

FURNITURE NOT SOLD? Donate it to Katharine House Hospice. We collect for free. Telephone Cannock 01543 466885, Stafford 01785 247630, House clearance service 01785 760715.

Furniture not sold, why not donate it?
katharine house hospice – embracing life and living
Reg charity number: 1011712
We can turn your quality used furniture into 1st class care for patients at Katharine House
Call us now on 01785 760715
for details or to arrange a FREE collection

LOCKS OF LONDON dark oak dresser, 2 leaded door, arch at top, 2 draws, 2 cupboards at bottom, 45 x 692. £250 ono. 07854 178589.

STAG MINSTREL bedroom suite, bed plus headboard, 3 door wardrobe, dressing table and stool, £150. 01543 423503.

YOUNGER TOLEDO sideboard with top display unit, £200. 01543 423503.

Household Appliances

ONE WEEK ONLY - BIG DISCOUNTS
Cookers, Fires, Autos, Tumble dryers, Built in ovens, Hobs, Fridge freezers, lots more at low prices.
01902 403770
—— Past & Present ——
24 - 26 church street, Bilston (opposite town hall).

Items For Sale

ADVERTISERS ARE REMINDED
That the Business Advertisements (Disclosure) Order of 1977 requires that advertisements must clearly differentiate between Private and Trade.

ASH RECLAMATION new and used building materials, upvc doors and windows 01543 453222.

ASH RECLAMATION
All reclaimed building materials
UPVC doors and windows
New and Used
Gatehouse Trading Est. Lichfield Road, Brownhills, WS8 6JZ
01543 453222
07956 627367

Items Wanted

✔ CASH PAID ✔
£300+ PER OUNCE
FOR 9 CARAT GOLD.
ANY AMOUNT COLLECTED!
Sovereigns £200+ each, gold coins, pre - 47 silver coins, watches, costume jewellery, porcelain, any oriental items, old brass items, any silver items, War medals military etc.
Lady Buyer
✔ Call: 01922 495066 or 07971 783206 ✔

READERS ARE ADVISED to carefully consider all of their options before agreeing to the sale of any of their items.

WANTED
VINTAGE TOYS
Star Wars, He-Man, Ghost Busters, Ninja Turtles, Corgi or Dinky.
All vintage toys considered.
Good prices paid.
Unleash the cash in your loft.
Call Tony on 07812 903338.

In Your Garden

BLOXWICH FENCING
Supply and Fit or DIY
Credit cards taken • Free quotes WS3 2BQ
01922 712184

6x5 Lap Panels
£17 each (inc vat)
WS3 2BQ
Bloxwich Fencing Ltd or 01922 712184

CHESTNUT SHEDS AND FENCING LTD
Manufacturers and Suppliers of Heavy Duty Fully Tanalised Sheds, Summerhouses & All Garden Buildings.
Super Quality/Competitive Prices
Bespoke Buildings Fitting Available
Unit 17, Oak Street, Quarry Bank DY5 2JH
01384 913422/01384 569779
www.chestnutshedsandfencing.co.uk

PC's, Laptops & Accessories

CLIENT COMPUTERS Certified technician and microsoft partner. Repair and maintain laptops and pcs. Virus removal, broken screens, wifi, windows problem etc. Laptops available. 0121 556 9481

CLIENT COMPUTERS
Certified technician & Microsoft partner.
Repair & maintain laptops and PCs. In West Midlands.
Virus removal, broken screens, wifi.
Windows problems etc.
Home visits or bring to me.
Long established.
Laptops available.
0121 556 9481

specialists at your service

Appliance Repairs

A SAME DAY REPAIR - Cookers Autos Fridges Vacs and Micros. Call 07900 578897 / 07801 746853.

Aerials

AA DIGITAL AERIALS
AERIALS FITTED FROM £79.99
01902 858191 • 01384 429166
01543 439095 • 01922 716029

CLASSIFIEDS BOOSTS BUSINESS!

"I am very pleased with the response I get from my Classified Advertising Contract"
Steve - AA Digital Aerials

For great business results call
01902 319 191
ClassifiedAds
Brought to you by Express & Star

Alarms/Security

PREMIER ALARMS
Supplied and Fitted £249
Servicing and Repairs
12 Months Warranty
All areas covered
All quotes beaten!
Call: 0121 601 9791

Bathrooms

BATHROOM DESIGN All bathrooms fitted, tiling, flooring, complete bathrooms: 07850 382548.

Building Services

APPROVED CONTRACTOR
All damp problems, roofing, all building & all plastering work.
Free quotes 07538 118034 or 01902 752161.

G & D BUILDERS
Over 35 years exp
All aspects of building work
Extensions, loft conversions, roofing, driveways & landscaping.
All work guaranteed
07837 994465 / 01902 579592

Building Supplies

QUALITY DOORS AND HARDWOOD FLOORING @ low prices. Call Arnold Laver 0121 533 5428.

RECLAIMED BRICKS, Tiles, Slates, Oakbeams, Flooring, York Stone. Cawarden 01889 574066. sales@cawardenreclaim.co.uk

Carpentry & Joinery

SPR CARPENTRY Six internal pre-primed doors fully fitted from £370. 0121 5322672 or 07958 552625.

Carpet Fitters

A CARPETS & VINYLS supplied or just fitted, quality samples brought to your home, no job too small, free quotes call Mark 01543 820598 / 07941 619694.

Driveways & Patios

P.W DRIVEWAYS
The Block Paving Specialists.
Patios, Drivewyas, Pathways etc.
SPECIAL OFFER £50 PSM
Free Quotes & Advice
0800 747 1435
(based in Great Wyrley)

Fencing

CLASSIFIEDS BOOSTS BUSINESS!

"I am extremely happy with the service I get from my Express & Star Classified Sales Representatives and would recommend them to anyone! They have done a very professional job with my website so I get online enquiries as well now."
Michael- Portway Fencing

For great business results call
01902 319 191
ClassifiedAds
Brought to you by Express & Star

PORTWAY FENCING
SPECIAL OFFER
10 Bays of quality fencing, concrete posts, gravel boards **£695**
Heavy duty panels supplied & fitted.
0121 531 5250 / 07866 137 656
Mon - Fri 8am - 4.30pm
Sat 8am - 12noon
83 Portway Rd, W'bury
DELIVERY AVAILABLE
www.portwayfencing.co.uk

Gates

ALL METAL GATES,RAILINGS, etc. Free quotes, also repairs & fitting. 07903 500642 24 hours.

DARLASTON FABS 30 years exp in supplying/ fitting gates and railings. Free quotes: 07497 667752.

Gardening Services

J&B TREE CARE Landscape and Jetwashing Services. All Pesticide /Fungicide work. Free fixed quotes: 07786 166856/ 01922 449268.

Landywood Tree & Landscaping Services
All garden work, tree felling/lopping, pruning, hedges trimmed, turf, patios, fencing, block-paving etc.
www.landywoodlandscaping.co.uk
01922 898 710 / 07973 177 976

Gas Fitting

GAS SERVICES
- Boilers • Cookers
- Fires • Gas Checks
- Landlord Certificates
- Gas Leaks Traced

Fitted, Serviced and Repaired
Same Day Service
Free Quotes
DISCOUNTS FOR OAPs
Call: 01902 366855/ 07761 973975

READERS ARE ADVISED To check that anyone carrying out any Gas work is Gas Safe Registered. It is an offence under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 to carry out gas work in the UK without being on the Gas Safe Register.

Handyman Services

YOUR LOCAL HANDYMAN
FREE QUOTES
All work guaranteed, Most trades covered, References available on request. No job too big or too small!
CALL MIKE: 07947 621047
0121 6010479

House Clearances

A1 HOUSE CLEARANCE
Full, part and single rubbish removed.
Garage and sheds cleared.
Leather 3 piece suites and leather chesterfields wanted.
01922 492007

A1 HOUSE CLEARANCE
Full, part and single rubbish removed.
Garage and sheds cleared.
Leather 3 piece suites and leather chesterfields wanted.
01922 492007

A ABSOLUTE BEST cash price paid for house clearances and bereavements. Also removals undertaken. **07852 172641 / 07710 360327**

ALL ROUND CLEARANCE
Professional family run business
House clearances full or part, also garages, sheds etc.
Telephone Kev
07794 912844

Kitchen Fitters

THE KITCHEN FITTER Over 20 years experience. Call 07881 654757 or 01543 373233.

Lock Services

LOCKRITE local father and daughter locksmiths, lock-outs, broken locks, UPVC specialist, 24hr service. 07585 099385.

Painters/ Decorators

LADY DECORATOR Full house or one wall to customer requirements. Free quotes call: 07522 643706.

Express & Star
LANDSCAPE GARDENERS!
CLAIM YOUR FREE ADVERT
(T&Cs Apply)
Call Claire Smith: 01902 319661
claire.smith@expressandstar.co.uk

Plastering

MINT PLASTERING
For the very best in plastering and rendering, full rooms inc materials from 110. Halls, stairs and landings from 200
30 years experience.
Free quotes. All work guaranteed
01922 606503 / 07519 694516

MINT PLASTERING & rendering 30 yrs exp. All work guaranteed. 01922 606503 or 07519 694516.

STEVES PLASTERING SERVICE Clean and Reliable, All Work Undertaken, All Areas. Call 0121 567 5919 / 07977 262943.

Plumbing & Heating

A.A HEATING & PLUMBING All gas work. Install/ Service/ Repair. Free quotes call: 07540 950588.

ALL PLUMBING WORK UNDERTAKEN
No job too large. All work guaranteed.
Call Will for a free quote
07521 411108

PLUMBING WORK UNDERTAKEN No job too small or large. Call Will for a free quote on: 07521 411108.

Skip Hire

GOLDSHILL SKIPS
Bring your own waste cheaper than skips. General, Green, Wood waste any size vehicle. Phone for prices:
0121 557 3346

CLASS 1 DRIVER required. Walking floor trailer experience preferred. Walsall area. Call 07588 670336.

A absolute affordable skip
RUSSELL SKIPS
Mini, midi skips
Prompt delivery / collection
(0121) 520 3388 / 07721 387990

STONES SKIP HIRE 0121 557 1480 / 07886 721875 www.stonesskiphire.co.uk

Rubbish Removal

LETS TALK RUBBISH No Skips Needed.Load/Remove any Waste, House Clearance. 07969 628382

Roofing

MG ROOFING Flat roofs, tiling, roof repairs, fascias and gutters. Call 01902 238989 / 07580 465449.

STOPPS PAGE & SONS ROOFING
We specialise in:
New Roofing, Re Roofing, Leak Repairs, Emergency Repairs, Lead Work, Tiling and Slating.
07476 834512 0121 4204374
www.stoppsandpage.co.uk

Removals

CALL DEAN NOW: For all your Removal needs. 07429 453209/ 01902 830870 / 01384 940260.

KT HOUSE REMOVALS
12 years experience.
SINGLE ITEMS TO FULL LOADS.
LOCAL OR DISTANCE. FULLY INSURED.
Free Quotes - Call Ric on:
07771 727119

KC REMOVALS We beat any quote, full or part loads, all areas. Anything considered. Call on 07867 862227.

KT REMOVALS 12 yrs exp. Single items to full load removals. Local / distance. Call Ric: 07771 727119.

Tree Services

BUDGET TREE SURGERY Tall or small. Conifers & hedge trimming. Shrubs pruned, tidy ups & make overs 01543324608/ 07936882552

Upholstery

MR B'S UPHOLSTERY
RE- UPHOLSTERING OF SOFA'S, DINING FURNITURE, CARAVANS, CAR RETRIMS AND MORE.
www.mrbsupholstery.co.uk
01543 500677 07738 851601

4 Pets & Animals

Equestrian Corner

ALL READERS are advised to check if Horses, Donkeys or Ponies have the required Passport information.

Pets Corner

NOTICE TO READERS
Please be aware that when purchasing a puppy there are some simple guidelines you can follow to ensure that you are not purchasing from a Puppy Farmer:
1. Try to ensure you visit the puppy whilst it is still with it's Mother.
2. Do not arrange to collect a puppy from any other location than that of the breeder.
3. Ensure that you are given any KC documentation, if pedigree.
Whilst Midland News Association publications take great care to avoid publication of advertisements from Puppy Farmers we cannot accept any liability should readers purchase from this kind of establishment.

BLACK LABRADOR PUPPIES bitches only, 9 weeks old, not KC reg but out of working parents. £400. 07982 660962 / 01543 578160.

5 Business & Farming

business directory

Commercial Premises

UNITS AND OFFICE SPACE to let in Oldbury, West Bromwich and Walsall. Easy Terms. Ashmore Properties 0121 520 5318.

6 Property

Accommodation To Let

NOTICE TO READERS
Readers are advised to seek independent legal advice before entering into any financial commitments/contracts.

NOTICE TO READERS
It is an offence under the Accommodation Agencies Act 1953, for an Agency to charge a fee simply for the registration of your requirements and/or supplying particulars of premises to let.

J9 Accommodation
NO DEPOSIT
★MOVE IN TODAY★
Studios *from* £90pw*
Rooms *from* £65pw*
*Includes Most Bills
CHECK WEBSITE FOR LIVE LIST
Midland Landlord Accreditation Scheme
01902 213121
J9accommodation.com

BOOK YOUR ADVERTISEMENTS OR FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS ONLINE AT
bookanad.
expressandstar.co.uk
and become one of hundreds of customers who regularly receive exclusive special offers & discounts.

ClassifiedAds

Properties Wanted

WE PAY 100% of purchase price EVERY TIME!
FAST 4 Your House CASH
BLACK COUNTRY HOMES
You agree the price, we buy the house...
• NO AGENTS FEES • COMPLETION TO SUIT YOU
• FREE SOLICITORS • ANY HOUSE, ANY CONDITION
0800 999 999 6
01384 500 500
30 yrs
www.black-countryhomes.co.uk * subject to terms

CASH NOW FOR YOUR HOUSE
Wolverhampton properties
UP TO £25,000 CASH ADVANCE NOW (in 24hrs)
We can buy your house in 2 days
• Free Solicitors • No Fees • Any House • Any Condition
0800 389 6788 01902 628047
Lines open 24 hours a day 7 days a week
Terms applicable

Need to sell your house quick?
WE WILL BUY YOUR HOME...
FAST FOR CASH
Guaranteed sale in 48 Hour
✓ No Hassle For You
✓ No Commission
✓ All Legal Fees Paid

MPK
Call us today on: 01902 50 44 48
or visit our website: mpknights.co.uk

Yes! HOMEBUYERS
THE EASY WAY TO SELL YOUR HOUSE
We Buy Houses For Cash
Free Valuation? Yes! No Fees? Yes! Any Location? Yes!
Fast Sale? Yes! Any House? Yes! Any Condition? Yes!
Get your FREE, instant cash offer today!
The Property Ombudsman
Call 0121 663 1797
or text "Cash" to 66777 yeshomebuyers.com

Overseas Property

NOTICE TO READERS
Readers are advised to seek independent legal advice before entering into any financial commitments.

7 Jobs

Employment Wanted

WORK WANTED
Driving, very experienced from Arctic to Transit van, any driving considered, any trade, CPC etc, full / part time or casual.
01922 516528.

Courses

BIRMINGHAM: 30 NOV - 1 DEC. & 27 - 28 JAN.
STOKE ON TRENT: 17 - 18 JAN.
WOLVERHAMPTON: 6 - 7 DEC. & 8 - 9 MARCH
TELFORD: 25 - 26 JAN.

Learn how to take blood
TRAIN AS A PHLEBOTOMIST
NATIONALLY RECOGNISED AND ACCREDITED
Introduction to Phlebotomy
TWO DAY COURSE - National UK Qualification
NO PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE REQUIRED
For more info or to book: www.geopace.com
HIGH DEMAND IN: Hospitals - GP Surgeries - Clinics - Private Sector - Community - MOD

Part Time - General

DRIVER / BEARER required for local funeral company. 20hrspw, must have own transport.
Telephone 0121 533 0241.

FUNERAL ARRANGER 20hrspw, must have own transport.
Telephone 0121 533 0241.

Warehouse & Distribution

WAREHOUSEMAN Location : WEDNESBURY
Key req : FORKLIFT LICENSE, Crane license, driving license. Age over 25 for insurance purposes
Duties: Booking materials in and out, moving material around factory, some finishing machine operations
Apply : CV by return to sales@hallen.co.uk

8 Motoring

Cars Under £1500

CITROEN C3, 2006, 69,000 miles, 1.4cc petrol, 10 months MoT, recent clutch/cambelt, dealer fsh, £895 ono. 01785 296633.

BARGAIN
FIAT PUNTO
1.2, sunroof special,
3-dr, 05 reg, 56,600 miles,
MoT April 2018,
1 previous owner, good runner,
good bodywork,
£750.
01922 622249.

BARGAIN
FORD FIESTA FINESSE
2001,
69,000 miles,
12 months MoT,
5-dr.
£550 ono
Bloxwich 01922 512510.

IDEAL FIRST CAR
NISSAN MICRA
1.2, 53 reg,
MoT till June, 57,000 miles,
new cam chain changed 2 years ago,
very reliable, starts first time,
one lady owner from new.
£500 ono.
07980 648006.

CONVERTIBLE
RENAULT MEGANE CONVERTIBLE
2002, white, MoT, July 2018, full Leather trim, Radio face off, very good condition, eye catching car, must be seen.
£650 ono
01922 479743 / 07866 823209.

EXCELLENT CONDITION
ROVER 45 LE
Turbo diesel,
X reg, excellent conditon.
MoT'd.
£575 ono.
07864 842076.

BARGAIN
VW POLO
5dr
04 plate
1.9 diesel
11 months MoT.
Clean and tidy.
£575.
07718 622950

Cars Over £1500

HAVE YOU CHECKED your advertisement today? We would respectfully remind advertisers that it is their responsibility to inform the publishers of any mistakes or inaccuracies on the first day of publication.

FORD MONDEO TITANIUM
2005, 82,000 miles, silver, long MoT, diesel, alloys, CD, half leather trim.
£1,795.
07758 768914.

HONDA ACCORD TOURER 2.2 CTDi SPORT
2007, 148k miles, grey met, black alloys, half leather, Sat Nav, Bluetooth, e/w, e/m, privacy glass, towbar, fsh, MoT August.
£1,695 ono.
07971 269191.

PEUGEOT 107 ENVY
2011, 54,000 miles, grey metallic paint, CL, ABS, air con, CD player, alloy wheels, very good condition.
£2,995 ono.
07867 527265.

IMMACULATE
PEUGEOT 208 PURE TECH ACTIVE
1.0, five door, white,
October 65 reg,
one lady owner,
9,500 miles only,
12 months warranty.
£6,750.
0121 358 6350.
07774 681486.

Scrap Vehicles

OUR ADVERTISERS are reminded that it is an offence under the Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013 to buy scrap cars/metal for cash.

ABC AUTO SALVAGE WANTED URGENT
Scrap & MOT Failures Best Prices Paid ELV Registered Spares Always Available
0121 557 0800 or
0121 557 0400.
Oldbury Area.

Vehicles Wanted

CROWN MOTORS guarantee best price for your unwanted cars/vans. 07903 549849, buyer will call.

spares & accessories

Mobile Mechanics

MB MOTORS MOBILE MECHANIC MOT'S, Servicing, Tyres, Diagnostics, AC & Electrics. 07809 871733

FreeAds
IT'S FREE, IT'S EASY
For items upto £250.
Online at
bookanad.
expressandstar.co.uk

9 Local Information

Public Notices

LEGAL / PUBLIC NOTICES
For convenience youmay fax any advertising requirements to
Marie Hogg on
01902 713146
or email marie.hogg@
expressandstar.co.uk
(remember to include a name/contact number for confirmation of receipt)

ClassifiedAds

Public Notices

SANDWELL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
Regeneration and Planning
Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015

I hereby give notice that Sandwell Council has received the following applications under the planning acts which it is required to give public notice for the reason given at the beginning of each group of applications.

This is a major application.

DC/17/61157	Pearson Adams Developments Ltd	Former Regis Lodge 50 George Avenue Rowley Regis B65 9BD	Partial demolition and proposed conversion and extension to create 39 No. 1 & 2 bed apartments, associated parking, landscaping and railings to boundary (Resubmission of planning application DC/17/60487).

This is a major application.

DC/17/61139	Mr David Sheldon Sheldon & Clayton	Site Of 65 To 91 Great Bridge Street West Bromwich	Demolition of single storey warehouse unit and proposed 2 No. warehouse units for storage or distribution (Use Class B8).

This is a major application.

DC/17/61171	Berkeley Common Square Investment Fund	Home Bargains Unit 5 Windmills Shopping Centre Cape Hill Smethwick B66 3PR	Proposed variation of condition 34 of DC/03/41344 – to allow the removal of the market hall entrances.

This is a major application.

DC/17/61144	Colcastor A Sarl c/o Quidnet	Units 1 And 2 Block 3 Wednesbury Trading Estate Wednesbury WS10 7JN	Proposed change of use from plastics recycling facility to storage or distribution (Use class B8).

This is a major application with an Environmental Impact Assessment
The proposed development may affect the setting of a Listed Building(s), and the character or appearance of a Conservation Area.

DC/17/61177	Verus Energy Oak Limited	Land At Giffords Recycling Limited Giffords Way Kelvin Way West Bromwich B70 7JR	Proposed construction and operation of an energy recovery facility.

Members of the public may inspect copies of these applications at Council House, Freeth Street, Oldbury, West Midlands, B69 3DE (between 8.45a.m. and 5.30p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, 9.00a.m. and 5.30p.m. Wednesday and 8.45a.m. to 5p.m. Friday) or via the Council's Public Access website (www.sandwell.gov.uk).

Anyone who wishes to make representations about these applications can do so via the website, or should write to the Council at the above address within 21 days (and 21 days for Listed Building or Conservation Area consent) of the date of this advertisement quoting the application reference number.

Mr Jan Britton, Chief Executive

SANDWELL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

The council has made **THE BOROUGH COUNCIL OF SANDWELL (DAVID HARMAN DRIVE, WEST BROMWICH) (20MPH ZONE) ORDER 2017,** effective from 09/11/2017, to: 1) Prohibit any vehicle exceeding a speed of 20mph on the sections of roads highlighted in grey on drawing number 39301. 2) The provisions of this Order shall not apply to:- any vehicle on an occasion when it is being used for fire brigade, ambulance or police purposes, if the observance of that provision would be likely to hinder the use of the vehicle for the purpose for which it is being used on that occasion, or to a vehicle being used: (a) for Serious Organised Crime Agency purposes, or (b) for training persons to drive vehicles for use of Serious Organised Crime Agency purposes. However, (except where it is being used for training by the person by whom it is being driven), the exemption does not apply in relation to a vehicle unless it is being driven by a person who is being trained in driving vehicles at high speeds. 3) The Order shall not apply to a vehicle if it is a vehicle used for naval, military or air force purposes and that vehicle if it is being driven by a person or a member of the armed forces of the Crown on an occasion when:- (a) the person driving the vehicle is a member of the special forces as defined in the Road Traffic Exemptions (Special Forces) (Variation and Amendment) Regulations 2011; and (b) the vehicle is being driven: (i) in response, or for practice in responding, to a national security emergency by a person who has been trained in driving vehicles at high speeds; or (ii) for the purpose of training a person in driving vehicles at high speeds. Full details may be examined at: Sandwell Council House, Freeth Street, Oldbury, West Midlands, B69 3DE during normal office hours. Anyone wishing to question the validity of the Order on the grounds that any aspect of the relevant legislation has not been complied with, can apply to the High Court by 21/12/2017.

Department for Transport

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

The Secretary of State gives notice of the proposal to make an Order under section 247 of the above Act to authorise the stopping up of the whole of Meeting Street at Tipton, in the Metropolitan Borough of Sandwell.

If made, the Order would authorise the stopping up only to enable development to be carried out should planning permission be granted by Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council. The Secretary of State gives notice of the draft Order under Section 253 (1) of the 1990 Act.

Copies of the draft Order and relevant plan will be available for inspection during normal opening hours at Tipton Library, Unity Walk, Owen Street, Tipton DY4 8QL in the 28 days commencing on 09 November 2017, and may be obtained, free of charge, from the address stated below quoting NATTRAN/WM/S247/3061.

Any person may object to the making of the proposed order by stating their reasons in writing to the Secretary of State at nationalcasework@dft.gsi.gov.uk or National Transport Casework Team, Tyneside House, Skinnerburn Road, Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 7AR, quoting the above reference. Objections should be received by midnight on **07 December 2017**. You are advised that your personal data and correspondence will be passed to the applicant/agent to enable your objection to be considered. If you do not wish your personal data to be forwarded, please state your reasons when submitting your objection.

G Patrick, Casework Manager

SANDWELL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

The Borough Council of Sandwell (Churchyard Road, Tipton) (Temporary Road Closure) Order 2017, has made an Order to temporarily prohibit any vehicles from proceeding along Churchyard Road, Tipton between Lower Church Lane and Heritage Way. The maximum duration is 18 months, but the work is expected to be completed by 08/12/17 effective from 27/11/17. Traffic will be diverted via Station Street, Park Lane East, Lower Church Lane and vice-versa. Purpose – laying of a water main to a new housing development by South Staffs Water.

The Borough Council of Sandwell (St Vincent Crescent, West Bromwich) (Temporary Road Closure) Order 2017, has made an Order to temporarily prohibit any vehicles from proceeding along the western side of St Vincent Crescent opposite house numbers 79 to 85. The maximum duration is 18 months, but the work is expected to be completed by 12/03/18 effective from 27/11/17. Traffic will be diverted via the adjacent stretch of St Vincent Crescent and vice-versa. Purpose – work associated with a new housing development by Lovell and improvements to the highway.

10 Personals

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Sandwell Chronicle Thursday, November 9, 2017

It's a chunky five-seat SUV with handsome imposing looks

Ford Edge makes its presence well-known on the open road

By Dave Brown

You certainly feel in command of the road in our long-term Ford Edge. It's a car that's not to be trifled with.

A chunky five-seat SUV with handsome, imposing looks, it tells other road users: "I'm in charge and I'm not to be messed with."

I've found this to be the case in all sorts of driving environments lately. I'm the last person you would describe as aggressive behind the wheel, dutifully adhering to 70mph speed limits on deserted midnight motorways, and always being ultra-patient with the learner drivers who seem to spend every rush-hour bimbling along the lanest.

But other road users do seem to be somewhat in awe of EG17FKH. Fellow motorway drivers move left even if I'm approaching them from behind only very gradually, and those slow-moving learners do seem to be inclined to turn off if their instructors can see me in their rear-view mirrors. I'm not complaining, of course. If people are moving out of my way – and, true, it could all be in my imagination – it means the Edge is being noticed. And if nothing else, that's excellent news as far as my safety is concerned, as well as that of my passengers.

The Edge has front, rear and side sports bodystyling

So from the outside, yes, the Edge ticks all the boxes, and as well as that general air of dominance, our car stands out for other reasons.

It boasts front, rear and side sports bodystyling with dark exterior detailing, and snazzy 20-inch platinum grey alloy wheels. A rear spoiler helps to make the back view easy on the eye. All good.

Inside, however, I think it's a slightly different story. Sure, everything the driver needs is close at hand, easy to operate, and sensibly laid out.

And the kit list is impressive, including a Sony DAB navigation system with 12 speakers, alloy pedals, a rear-view camera and a 'Quickclear' heated front windscreen. An intelligent all-wheel drive system can determine how much grip, cornering balance and responsiveness is required in wet, dry or icy conditions and on varying terrain. Definitely a useful feature for more adventurous buyers.

It's just that whenever I get into a car for the first time – and I'd never driven a Ford Edge until a couple of weeks ago – I'm looking for the nifty design touch that catches my eye; something a little different – quirky, even – that raises a smile, and makes you think to yourself, "I really like that". I must confess, I didn't really find one in this car. What does help lift the mood, however, is our model's panoramic roof with sunshade. It's part of the ST-Line Lux Pack which adds £1,275 to the base price.

And as far as general levels of comfort are concerned, I've no complaints whatsoever. Impressive amounts of interior space will mean no-one will moan about feeling cramped and it's easy to find the perfect driving position.

Something else that helps make the Edge a pleasure to pilot and which is definitely worth a mention is active noise control. Microphones detect and measure specific sound waves while a control unit can separate the noises you do want to hear, such as conversation and the radio (Absolute 80s every time, please), from those you don't. The system then creates inaudible 'white noise' to cancel out any unwelcome sounds, and provide you with a real sense of tranquillity when you're driving. Clever stuff!

So how much will an Edge set you back? Well, a standard model will mean you'll be parting with almost £40,000 while our car, an ST-Line example with extras such as active steering, a front wide-view camera and adaptive cruise control with pre-collision assist, comes in at nearly £43,000.

You certainly get a lot for your money though – so if you're in the market for a substantial SUV that's not short on safety features and useful tech, this is a car that could definitely have the edge.

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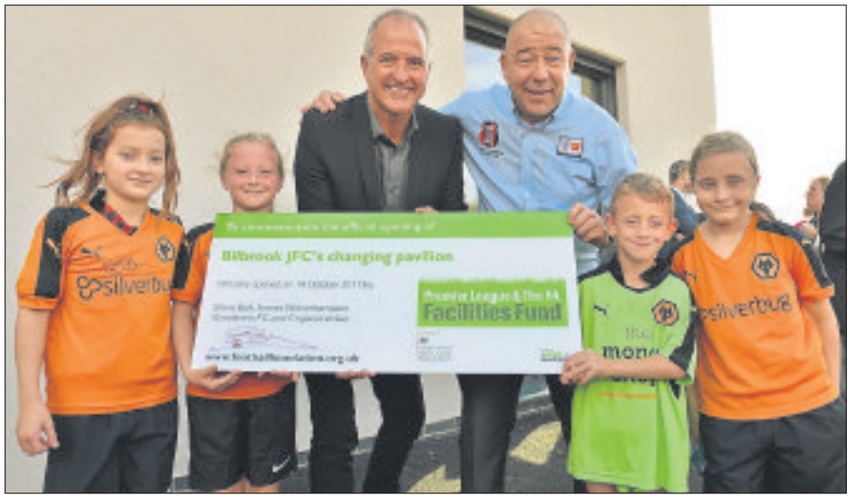

Steve Bull and chairman Dave Maydew with Olivia Green, Ella Green, Liam Bailey and Olivia Grainger

Diane Cook, James Newman, chairman Maydew and Rebecca Harris at the opening of the new pavilion

Inside the Bilbrook Juniors' changing rooms

The impressive £850,000 development

New facilities enable life to begin at 40 for club

SPORTING FEATURE

By Matt Maher

"We had to put our case forward. At times it felt like we were moving one step forward and then two back."

THE building of an £850,000 new facility has a football club believing they can prove life begins at 40.

Bilbrook Juniors fielded their first team back in 1978 and will next year enter the fifth decade stronger than ever thanks the new state-of-the-art pavilion at their Pendeford Lane home which features changing rooms, a clubhouse and bar.

Constructed with the aid of grants from the Premier League, the FA and Wolverhampton City Council, it has club members hailing a new dawn.

"The club has been in existence for nearly 40 years but in many ways this is the starting point," said chairman Dave Maydew.

Reality

"Having a facility like this has been a long-term goal and it has taken the hard work of too many people to mention in order to make it a reality.

"But in many ways the big job starts now. Until now all the money has gone into keeping the club going. Now we are in a position where we can start giving back."

The new facility is the result of a decade-long campaign and replaces the club's previous clubhouse, which had fallen into a state of disrepair.

It was made possible thanks to a £484,529 grant from the Premier League & The FA Facilities Fund, which is delivered by the Football Foundation. Wolverhampton City Council also contributed £350,000 to the project. "We had to put our case forward. It wasn't a simple or easy process and at times it felt like we were moving one step forward and then two back," said Maydew.

Bilbrook Juniors Under-11s East are one of the many teams to wear the club colours

"But the end result is more than worth it. I would love to be able to list all the people who have helped us out along the way but quite frankly it would take up two pages of the newspaper.

"We are all volunteers, no-one getting paid a penny.

"We do it because we love it. I joined the club 22 years ago when my son started playing aged five.

"Before then I used to play football myself. Now I feel like I am giving something back.

"It's been a real team effort and means we can now move onto the next phase."

The new facility, at a ground which features two full-sized pitches and four-mini pitches, was opened last month by Wolves legend Steve Bull.

Complete with two referee's changing rooms and a kitchen, along with spectator toilets with disabled access, it is expected to increase participation at a club which already fields 31 teams at all age levels in a variety of regional leagues, including a ladies team.

In total Bilbrook have around 1,500 members including players, coaches and volunteers.

Future plans will see the construction of floodlights which should allow Bilbrook's mens team, who currently play in Division One of the West Midlands League, to further climb the non-league pyramid.

The facility is also set to benefit both the community and other clubs. Otter and Vixen FC and Gornal Colts will also use the site, while Wolves Community Trust are set to deliver training and community outreach programmes.

"It is not just for the club but for the community too, particularly for the children," said Maydew. "There is now a facility which can host functions. The old clubhouse was a drain on us. No-one wanted to go in but we were still paying for the gas and the electric.

"That is money which can now be reinvested into the club and help us build toward the future.

"In many ways this feels like a new beginning."

Globetrotters tour to stop off in Brum

THE world famous Harlem Globetrotters will bring their spectacular show to Birmingham next year during their 2018 World Tour.

The players have shot hoops with President Obama, played with Manchester United and much more. And they will be showing off their skills at the Genting Arena on May 18.

The Globetrotters recently wrapped up a busy 90th year tour, during which they named Pope Francis the ninth Honorary Harlem Globetrotter in team history, walked the runway at New York Fashion week, launched the Great Assist initiative alongside Robin Roberts – whom the team also named an honorary Harlem Globetrotter – pledging to spread 100 million smiles over the next 10 years, broke seven Guinness World Records® and remixed the team's legendary theme song, "Sweet Georgia Brown," with the help of Grammy Award-winning producer/songwriter Teddy Riley.

The Harlem Globetrotters® are legendary worldwide, synonymous with one-of-a-kind family entertainment and great basketball skills.

Speedway bosses to hold key talks

WOLVERHAMPTON Speedway have lined up a couple of key winter dates for fans. With the AGM of all promoters fast approaching, the club will be hosting a winter talk-in at the Cleveland Arms on Stow Heath Lane, close to Monmore, on Monday, November 27.

Representatives from the club management will be on hand to discuss developments and the impact decisions will have on Parrys International Wolves team building. The event is expected to start at 8pm.

Meanwhile, the traditional pre-Christmas season ticket day has been arranged for the stadium on Saturday, December 2, between 9.30am-1.30pm with the usual big turnout expected.

In Birmingham Brummies star Liam Carr announced his shock decision to quit speedway at the club's end-of-season presentation on Saturday. The 21-year-old broke the news after picking up three awards as he told fans 'that's me done'.

Matches switched for live TV coverage

TWO Wolves games and three Villa matches have been switched for live broadcast on Sky Sports.

Wolves now head to Sheffield Wednesday on Friday, December 15 (7.45pm) instead of the following day.

Their trip to Bristol City on December 30 is now a 5.30pm kick-off too. As a result of that game being later, the visit of Brentford has been moved back to January 2 (7.45pm, not on TV).

Villa's home game against Sheffield United on December 23 has been put back to 5.30pm. The trip to Brentford on Boxing Day is now a 7.30pm start and the match at Nottingham Forest on January 15 has been changed to a 5.30pm kick-off.

Even the lower divisions are finding their fixture list tweaked for television. Walsall took a break from their League One campaign on Saturday when they took on Newport County away in the FA Cup. The match was shown live on S4C with a 5.15pm kick-off.

Bully for you! Legend opens club pavilion

Page 35

Tenacious Darlaston find a way

Old Wulfrunians 0
Darlaston Town (1874) 2

WITH just one defeat in their last 11 league games 2nd placed Old Wulfs opened brightly but the work rate and tenacity of Darlaston ensured the home side were easily contained.

Noah Diallo and Ryan Bradshaw were sharp up front but Ryan McAllister and Lucas Hough stood firm at the heart of the defence. The 17-goal strike partnership of Scott Broadway and Hayden Hughes both had efforts blocked with Jack Rowley and Josh McEvoy impressive at the heart of the home defence.

The visitors took the lead on 24 minutes, Giles and Hughes combined down the left, Hughes cut inside and unleashed a 16 yard shot, keeper Jamie Bostock failed to hold on to the ball and Broadway slotted home from eight yards.

Darlaston opened the second half full of confidence the impressive Luke Charlton and Ricky Kelly finding space in midfield to create openings for O'Connell and Broadway.

The game turned in the 50th minute when Wulfs were reduced to 10 men Chris Farnell sent off for a stamp on Charlton. As is often the case being reduced to 10 men spurred on the home side and unsettled Darlaston who started to chase the game leaving them exposed to the pace of Diallo and Billy Morgan.

Darlaston eventually doubled their lead on 64 minutes. Martin Stanton set up Sam Giles whose pace took him clear of Kyle Pearson, the winger whipped in a right wing cross which found Broadway whose first effort was saved by Bostock but the striker was first to react and he poked the ball home from four yards.

High-flying Carr says 'that's me done' in speedway

BIRMINGHAM star Liam Carr announced his decision to quit speedway at the club's end of season presentation on Saturday. The 21-year-old broke the news after picking up three awards as he told fans "that's me done."

Carr was the Surestop Brummies' top points scorer in 2017. Said Carr: "It's been a blast during my time at Birmingham but that's me done now. I'd just like to thank all of the supporters and the management."

Carr won the prestigious Graham Warren Trophy as he came out on top in a vote. He was also voted the Birmingham Speedway Supporters' Club Rider of the Year as well as the Ductair Electrics Ltd Rider of the Year for bagging the most rider of the night nominations at Perry Barr throughout 2017.

Captain Jack Parkinson-Blackburn won two awards for Most Improved Average and Fastest Brummie of the year while Tom Bacon received the Management's Rider of the Year Award.

Trophies roll in for Great Barr youngsters

Trophy winner Matt

TWO teenage members of Great Barr Golf Club are enjoying a very successful year.

Their performances have delighted club officials who predict a bright future in the game for Ellis Muckley and Matt Sheldon, both 17, *writes Paul Marston*.

Muckley, a former student at Wood Green Academy, is from Wednesbury, plays off a handicap of two, and is currently attending the Lee Westwood Golf Academy in Cheshire, five days a week. Highlight of his year came recently when he won Great Barr's main Championship, shooting 77 and 71 in the two rounds, then clinching the title after a three-hole play-off against two adult members of the club.

Sheldon, from Streetly, is studying at Streetly Academy, and, playing off a handicap of five, he recently won the Staffs County Junior Order of Merit after a sudden death play-off against another young Great Barr member, Dan Taylor.

He also captained the Staffordshire under-16 Boys to victory in the annual Midland 10 Counties Cup, which was played at Great Barr.

Ellis Muckley with

PULIS FEARS A LACK OF BELIEF

TONY PULIS admits he is concerned that confidence is being sapped from his Albion players.

The under-fire Baggies boss will return from the international break fighting for his job in tough fixtures against Chelsea and Tottenham.

But he is worried that a 10-game winless streak in all competitions is starting to take its toll on his players, leaving the squad jaded and low.

The mood in the dressing room after the 1-0 defeat to a 10-man Huddersfield team was flat ahead of the group dispersing for the international break. Pulis is eager to rebuild confidence over the next two weeks, but will have to do it without many of his first-team players who are away on international duty.

Four Albion players are taking part in important World Cup qualifiers, Jake Livermore has been recalled to the England squad for the games against Germany and Brazil, and five more are involved in friendlies too.

"The concern is obviously the confidence with the players and everything else," said Pulis.

"The biggest worry is the players. I've been a manager for a long, long time. Confidence is the major factor with the team and with the players. If I see a drop off with the players then that would be a concern."

Pulis expects such a poor run to impact the mentality of his players, but refused to criticise the effort that his team put in. "They've worked really hard again," he said. "I don't think anybody can say that people were hanging around or standing about, they've had a right go.

"We lacked that little bit of quality when we got in the final third at times but it wasn't lack of effort or lack of commitment."

And he waved away the suggestion that the players didn't care saying "they are desperately disappointed." Albion fans made their feelings felt at the John Smith's Stadium on Saturday with chants calling for Pulis's head but the protests have continued into the week.

McClean hits out at 'cowards'

The incident when James McClean lunged into Tom Ince to earn a yellow card on Saturday

JAMES McCLEAN has blasted the 'cowards' among Huddersfield Town fans who launched missiles at him from the stands.

Bottles, coins, and lighters were thrown at the Albion winger towards the end of Saturday's game after he lunged in on Tom Ince near the byline.

It was a poor challenge that earned McClean a yellow card, but the 28-year-old was then bombarded from the home end. A bottle flew past him, causing the former Sunderland and Wigan man to round on the fans.

He then caught another missile in his left hand while the angry home supporters continued to hurl more than just abuse at him. And the Republic of Ireland international criticised the Terriers supporters, posting on Instagram: "Frustrating is the best word to describe today.. p.s launching bottles and other objects from up in the stands make you cowards not hard men."

McClean also criticised the BBC for putting his challenge in their highlights package on Match of The Day but not televising the response it got. He posted on Twitter: "Convenient how match of the day cameras pick up my tackle, but fail to pick up bottles, coins and lighters been throwing in same incident."

Drury wins award after retirement

BIRMINGHAM team manager Graham Drury won the National League Award at the All Party Parliamentary Group End of Season Presentation last week.

The annual function took place at the Houses of Parliament in Westminster where British Speedway's success stories from the season were celebrated.

2017 was Drury's final season in the sport and he received the award for his dedication and commitment to the club in all three leagues since 2007 and for his willingness to support the new promotion of David and Peter Mason.

It was a special moment for Drury who on the same day was out celebrating his first official day of retirement with wife Denise.

"It was totally unexpected but it is certainly an honour," Drury said.

"No matter what path you take in life, it's always nice when your work and the hours you've put in to something is recognised in such a way, particularly in a career which has lasted 50 years for me.

"I'm very lucky because I can't really say I've worked a day in my life to an extent.

"I've earned a living from doing things that I love and speedway has obviously been a big part of my life.

"I used to be a rider, I've staged plenty of successful ice meetings at Telford and as a team manager and promoter for teams on the shale I've got plenty of fond memories too.

"Birmingham Speedway has been a huge chapter of mine and my family's life too and this award is for everyone associated and connected with the club."

Onomah ruled out for u-21s qualifier

VILLA loanee Josh Onomah has been ruled out of England Under-21s' Euro 2019 qualifier against Ukraine due to injury.

Onomah suffered a groin injury in Villa's victory over Preston last week which also ruled him out of Saturday's defeat against Sheffield Wednesday.

Ben Chilwell and Dael Fry and have also withdrawn from manager Aidy Boothroyd's squad, leaving him with 20 fit players for tomorrow's match at the Obolon Arena in Kiev. England currently top Group 4 in qualifying following three wins and a draw.

★★★

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Thursday, November 9, 2017

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FLATBREADS
From **5.99**

CLASSICS

Smothered Chicken	8.79
Steak, Ale and Cheddar Suet Pie	8.49
Linguine Carbonara	8.99

GRILLS
From **9.99**

KIDS' MENU

2 courses 4.99
With mix and match sides

Kids can swap to roast dinner plus dessert on Sundays.

BURGERS
From **7.99**

FISH
From **6.99**

SUNDAY ROAST

2 adults and 2 kids 20.00
4 adults 25.00

Every Sunday from 12pm.

LIGHTER OPTIONS
From **6.49**

DESSERTS
From **3.29**

DAYTIME DEAL

Mains only 5.49
Add a starter for 1.99

Monday to Friday, 12-5pm.

drinks

Smoothies and Soft Drinks	from 1.80
Craft and Cask Ales	from 3.00
Range of Draught Wines	from 2.50
Range of Handcrafted and On Tap Cocktails	from 5.50

some of our seasonal specials

Beef Wellington	13.99
Spanish Chicken	8.99
Mushroom, Spinach and Truffle Tart	9.49

FEAST and be merry

at Cookhouse & Pub this Christmas

FESTIVE 2 COURSE MENU for 10.99

Celebrate Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Eve with our special menus.

Go online to see the menus and book your table.

Festive menu available from 23rd November.

COOKHOUSE and PUB

NOW OPEN

Introductory Offer

25% OFF FOOD

get together at

Wolverhampton Road, Oldbury, Sandwell, B69 2BH

Book your table at
cookhouseandpub.co.uk
or call **0121 552 3031**

COOKHOUSE and PUB

25% OFF FOOD

6th November – 1st December 2017.
Voucher code: BAJMPCND

Terms and conditions: The code above entitles you to 25% off food from our main food menu. Only one voucher is required per party, maximum party size is 8. Minimum purchase of one main meal required. Breakfast, Daytime Deal, Key Date Christmas Menus and Premier Inn Meal Deals are excluded from the offer. Offer valid all day Mon-Fri from 06.11.17–01.12.17. Weekends are excluded. Offer is valid at Cookhouse & Pub, Oldbury only. This voucher code cannot be exchanged for cash, is non-transferable, must not be reproduced, copied or varied and cannot be used with other offers, promotions or vouchers. All rights remain with the promoter who reserves the right to withdraw the offer at any time and without prior notice.